The Kingdom of Fife

ITS BALLADS & LEGENDS

ROBERT BOUCHER, JR.

Aberdeen

28 Sept/18

Borrisht opposite Marischal College.

Yours faithfully,
R. Boucher, jr.

THE KINGDOM OF FIFE:

ITS BALLADS AND LEGENDS.

BY

ROBERT BOUCHER, JUN.

In winter's tedious nights, sit by the fire
With good old folks; and let them tell thee tales
Of woful ages, long ago betid.

—*King Richard II.*

DUNDEE:
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1899.

TO

ANDREW CARNEGIE, Esquire

OF

SKIBO CASTLE,

This Book

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ERRATUM.

Line 12, page 163. For *Madamoiselles*, read *Mademoiselles*.

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Preface.

IN placing this work before the public, it has been my endeavour to bring within the compass of a moderately-sized volume the principal ballads and stories connected with the Kingdom of Fife, a county, in the words of a continental journal, "prolific of illustrious Scotsmen from the earliest period of our national history"—at a price which might recommend itself to every inhabitant of that historic land.

The best authors have been consulted, quotations from their works being severally acknowledged, either in the print or else in the index. A glance through the pages will perhaps afford justification for the hope that the reader will find the volume interesting as well as refreshing.

I have to thank Messrs MacGibbon & Ross, Edinburgh, for their gracious permission to reproduce Lordscairnie Castle; the Committee of Laing Library, Newburgh, for the splendid illustrations of Lindores Abbey and Macduff's Cross; and—amongst others — Mr John Allworth Courts, Cupar, for Struthers Castle; Mr Archibald Downie, St Andrews, for St Regulus' Tower; and Mr John R. Boak, Kirkcaldy, for Balwearie Castle. I find myself obliged, too, to acknowledge my gratitude to those friends who have already accorded me their warmest sympathy in bringing out the work.

R. B., JR.

DUNDEE, *December* 1899.

THE KINGDOM OF FIFE:

ITS BALLADS AND LEGENDS.

Fife's Field of Fame:

The Story of a Wonderful Dream.

A weary mortal falls asleep,
And dreams:
He starts—
Then hastes to write, his dream to keep.

SCOTLAND'S sun was just setting behind the western hills, and the sky above was crimsoned with his ruddy mystic glow. It was the close of one of those hot days in the fulness of summer, when the toilers of the world relish a breathing space of undisturbed quiet. My labours for the evening were over, and, glad to be free from life's madding crowd, I retired to rest awhile in the little rustic arbour which I had erected, in my leisure moments, at the foot of the garden that sloped gently down to the banks of the beautiful river Eden and looked across the rich meadow and woodlands to the blue twin Lomonds beyond. For many a day it had been a favourite retreat of mine—that rude log mansionette standing in a vale

beloved of Heaven; and doubly—yea, more than doubly beloved it appeared to me just then as the tranquil glory of a bountiful and gracious Nature overspread it—a glory calm and peaceful as the waveless bosom of the ocean, and silent, save for a tiny sound—the murmuring of the river below.

Anon a gentle breeze sprang up when the gray-mantled gloaming glided softly and stealingly adown the lovely valley. How I enjoyed those moments of blissful repose! Who would not? In a state of semi-sensibility I listened to the whisperings of eventide. The harp of the sighing night winds, "lightly swept by unseen fairy fingers," wafted to my ears the music of Heaven and the pensive sibilations of the woodlands, hurrying now in sweet falling cadences through the waving groves, and then breathing soft and low till the enchanting melody died away, as it were, in the distance. And amid the serenity there floated arbourwards to me, on the pinions of the wind, the rich mellow notes of the pennate evening warblers in the neighbouring copse, and the rare splash of the fishes as they sported themselves in the waters of the placid river. A drowsy feeling, engendered no doubt by the tranquillity of the scene, crept over me—the reason, gaoler of the mind, was caught napping—and soon I was locked in the embrace of "Nature's soft nurse."

As I slept, I dreamed a wondrous dream. In the doorway of the little summer-house stood a white-robed angel of Heaven. I must have started in my sleep, for, in a gentle, comforting voice, the Shining One addressed me—"Be not dismayed, O mortal, but follow me!"

I obeyed and followed without questioning, and hid my face from my companion, for I was afraid to look upon the messenger of God. She conducted me to her chariot, drawn by the winged and spotlessly white horses, Truth and Purity, and in a twinkling we were careering at a rapid rate through the shadows of night. Happening to glance towards the floor of the carriage I observed a huge instrument—of what kind or purpose it was impossible for me at that moment to determine, for the steeds,

apparently of their own accord, slowed pace and alighted near the summit of a verdure-clad, cone-shaped hill which I had no difficulty in recognising as Largo Law. Not even then was I allowed time for reflection. Once more my guide motioned for me to follow her. We traversed the intervening ground to the summit, and, on reaching it, the heavenly messenger laid the monster instrument, which had hitherto perplexed me—it was a powerful telescope—on a suitable spot, and then, having directed it towards the eastern horizon where a leaden mistiness seemed to hang over the North Sea, she commanded me to focus it and tell her what I beheld.

And this is what I saw:—at first a canvas or screen of great magnitude, let down by the four corners from Heaven—that, and nothing more. But when I had focussed the instrument with more determination and particularity, and fastened mine eyes once more upon the sheet, I was amazed to find it covered with throngs of human beings, of all sorts and conditions, many of them arrayed in what appeared to me the most ludicrous and peculiar-looking costumes. The creatures of unrecorded ages, methought, were gathered there. Yet the more I tried to fathom the mystery of the picture, the more did my dazzled mind become confused by the multiplicity of figures and groups of figures which it contained. In perplexity I turned to my guide, and she, comprehending the action, hastened to explain.

"What thou seest, O mortal, is an assembly of the illustrious sons and daughters of the Kingdom—in other words, Fife's Field of Fame, where are congregated the good and the great—the good-great, the bad-great, and the indifferent, awaiting the judgment-day.

"In the left-hand corner below are Sir John Scot of Scotstarvit, the statistician, holding in his hand his curious work—the *Staggering State of Scottish Statesmen;* Adam Smith, the great sociologist, in deshabille attire; Goodsir and Struthers, anatomists of no mean attainments; and a number of other scientists, including Mrs Mary Somerville, Dr Anderson, John

Mackay, James Horsburgh, and hard-working David Page, to whom Dr Andrew Bell is parading his Madras or monitorial system of education as a panacea for all ills pertaining thereto. Behind them stands the great seer of Fife, Michael Scott of Balwearie, 'a wizard of dreaded name,' and with him Sir John Leslie, Glenie, Duncan, and Wallace, the talented mathematicians, beholding with silent wonderment and reverential awe a solar system which two angels are unveiling and explaining to them.

"Near the divine being who holds the veil are Moffat and Ebenezer Henderson, the missionaries; the Bonnie Earle o' Moray and the debonair Duke of Rothesay—their wounds now healed, and beside them that calm, beautiful, and majestic-looking lady, whose graceful head and luxuriant tresses are concealed under a curiously threaded coif or hood, is the heroic Countess of Buchan—she who dared a husband's wrath and more nobly dared "to stem tyrannic pride" by crowning the Bruce at Scone. She talks with her father, the loyal and patriotic Earl of Fife. And near the Macduffian-hearted gentlewoman three crowned heads—David II., the unfortunate James III., and Charles the Martyr, from whose pallid face the sorrows of Whitehall have been swept away—are approaching in humble guise, with many becks and bows, to tender their grateful thanks for the unspeakable and unpayable kindness she did to their illustrious predecessor.

"Behind the Lady Isobel are the Brothers Adam, putting a *coup de pinceau*—a finishing touch, that is—here and there on their beautiful engravings of Diocletian's palace; near Rothesay stands quaint old Robert Lindsay of Pitscottie, to whom Andro of Wyntoun is displaying his Chronicles of Scotland, and beside him Sir Robert Sibbald, the historian, converses with two publishers, William Ritchie and Archibald Constable by name, about the printing of the manuscripts which he carries under his arm. In the opening between this group and the next are Alexander Selkirk or Selcraig, the prototype of

Robinson Crusoe and the hero of Juan Fernandez, and Squire Meldrum, Lord Lindsay's bosom friend and senator, recounting to each other the many adventures and perils which they have gone through. To the right of these two daring personages thou beholdest a Court of Justice, over which presides Lord Chancellor Campbell, and on the bench beside him sit Sir James Balfour, Edward Bruce, Bayne, Pitcairn, Spankie, Sir George Deas, and Professor John Erskine; and just before this group Sir William Reid, James Bruce —in court parlance, Lord Elgin, Governor-General of India, Sir Robert Playfair—voluminous writer as well as diplomatist, Sir John Arnott, Sir James Hay, and a few more legislators, are earnestly discussing the affairs of the realm with that great and good man, Sir James Melville of Halhill.

"Towards the top of the picture and near the centre sits the princeliest of monarchs, James I. of Scotland, his golden crown just emerging from among the laurel garlands which encircle his brow. Winningly he smiles on the band of musicians and choristers, in whose midst he is seated, and as he plays the harp as nobody else can, he sings of

> Light-armed knights on field careering free,
> Or wild-deer sporting gay in woody scene,
> Or love's soft lays in skilful melody,
> Or songs of ladies fair as fair can be.

The man on the king's right is Lord Kellie, as great a musical genius as ever lived, and those on the left are Patrick Birnie and James Oswald, an eminent composer whom Edinburgh sighs in vain for."

The Angel stopped.

As I gazed on the mysterious scene, a movement among the musicians arrested my attention. One and all were strumming their violins as if getting them into harmony with the royal harp. In an instant a weird, mournful rhythm was borne upwards to my ears, and I noticed the whole mighty assembly pause in their discussions to listen with bated breath to the

mystic melody. It seemed the prelude of an angel psalm. For a time I could hardly breathe—could only dumbly list to the sad, liquid, pensive voice of the regal songster as he warbled:—

Oh! why left I my hame? Why did I cross the deep?
Oh! why left I the land where my forefathers sleep?
I sigh for Scotia's shore, and I gaze across the sea,
But I canna get a blink o' my ain countrie.

The palm tree waveth high, and fair the myrtle springs;
And to the Indian maid the bulbul sweetly sings:
But I dinna see the broom, wi' its tassels on the lea,
Nor hear the lintie's sang o' my ain countrie.

Oh! here no Sabbath bell awakes the Sabbath morn,
Nor song of reapers heard amang the yellow corn;
For the tyrant's voice is here, and the wail o' slaverie;
But the sun of Freedom shines in my ain countrie!

There's a hope for every woe, and a balm for every pain;
But the first joys of our heart come never back again.
There's a track upon the deep, and a path across the sea;
But the weary ne'er return to their ain countrie.

"Surely," I ventured to remark, "surely I have heard that beautiful song before!" "No doubt," whispered my Guide; "it is a Fife song—the work of dear, homely Robert Gilfillan, the Dunfermlinite. I shall point him out to you presently. But see! Patie Birnie, another Whistler, is preparing to sing." Once more I strained every nerve to catch the music, and this was the fiddler's song:—

Last nicht there were four Maries,
This nicht there'll be but three;
There was Marie Beaton, and Marie Seaton,
And Marie Carmichael, and me.

Patrick, I was informed, wrote that ludicrous and humorous old ditty, *The Auld Man's Mare's Dead*, and was a well-known rhymer towards the close of the seventeenth century. More pieces were sung, but just as the minstrel concluded, the heavenly messenger tapped me on the arm and went on with her description of the scene.

"Behind the King of Scots," she said, "sits charming Lady Anne Lindsay of Balcarres, whose touchingly beautiful ballad of *Auld Robin Gray* contains the essence of a million love-tales, and melts the hearts of young and old; and the fearless-looking nobleman beside her is her kinsman, Sir David Lindsay of the Mount, one time Lord Lyon-King-at-Arms, whose name is still revered by his admiring countrymen, whose verses, and words, and phrases were their alphabet and catechism for generations, and whose bitter, scathing, satiric rage broke the keys of Rome and paved the way for the glorious Reformation. Upon his shoulder is perched the favourite parrot of his sovereign, James V. Near them are Lady Wardlaw *née* Halkett, the gifted authoress of the splendid old ballads of *Sir Patrick Spens* and *Hardyknute*, Sir Robert Aytoun, Robert Gilfillan, and Professor Tennant, with a copy of his celebrated *Anster Fair* sticking out of his pocket, and leaning—for he is lame—on the arm of Robert Henryson, whose exquisite pastoral of *Robin and Makyne* breathes the Scottish national spirit. On the other side stands Nature's youthful bard, Michael Bruce of Kinneswood, who is reading to Malone, the sailor-poet, Millar, Pringle, Thomson—surnamed Theta, Conolly, 'Poute'—the Josh Billings of Fife, and others of the poetical priesthood, *his Ode to the Cuckoo*—a lyric the like of which there is nothing in mortal language. It is the epitome of a penury-opprest yet calmly serene and perseveringly pious life—such a piety as neither the want of health, nor the lost hope of merited fame, nor the gnawing pangs of a relentless disease, could in any wise disturb or quench. Hearken unto it!"

Hail! beauteous stranger of the grove,
Thou messenger of Spring!
Now Heav'n repairs thy rural seat,
And woods thy welcome sing.

Soon as the daisy decks the green,
Thy certain voice we hear:
Hast thou a star to guide thy path,
Or mark the rolling year?

Delightful visitant ! with thee
I hail the time of flow'rs,
And hear the sound of music sweet
From birds among the bow'rs.

The school-boy, wand'ring through the wood
To pull the primrose gay,
Starts, thy curious voice to hear,
And imitates thy lay.

What time the pea puts on the bloom,
Thou fly'st thy vocal vale—
An annual guest, in other lands,
Another Spring to hail.

Sweet bird ! thy bow'r is ever green,
Thy sky is ever clear ;
Thou hast no sorrow in thy song,
No winter in thy year !

Oh ! could I fly, I'd fly with thee !
We'd make—with joyful wing—
Our annual visit o'er the globe,
Attendants on the Spring !

"At Michael's elbow," the Angel proceeded, "are the novelists and writers of the Kingdom,—unassuming Mrs Johnstone, the Brothers Bethune—'hardy sons of rustic toil,' old Adam Blackwood,—the senator of Poitiers, Dr Charles Rogers, Jerome Stone, Beatson—soldier and writer, and Watson, the historian,

Telling their tales the while, in merry bands.
Some, more retired,
Lie on the wild bank, 'mid the hum of bees,
Reading some legend old of Scottish fame,
The Bruce, the Douglas, and each warrior name.

Next Henryson is Sir David Wilkie, the people's painter, engaged in conversation with George Sanders, the distinguished miniaturist ; George Harvey, the artist of Covenanting times ; David Martin, the portrait-painter ; and Waller Paton, brother of the renowned Queen's Limner for Scotland.

"On the left hand above is a group of persons whom, from their appearance, tarnished by grim-visaged war, you will easily recognise as the soldiers of the county. Swarthy Macduff, the

lion-hearted Thane, occupies the centre, and round him are gathered Alexander Leslie, "the little crooked veteran" of Gustavus Adolphus's army, and Norman and David, Lord Newark—worthy scions of the same illustrious family; General James Lindsay, and John Earl Crawford, George II.'s champion at the battle of Dettingen, and "the most generous, the most gallant, the bravest, and the finest gentleman of his time"; Kirkcaldy of Grange, Colonels Anderson and Briggs, Sir John Bell, Harry Anstruther—the child-like youth who fell, facing the foe, at the Alma; Allan Clephane, Sir Ronald Fergusson, and Sir William Hope—the most accomplished swordsman of all ages, with many a hero more—and all in different garb.

"In front of this throng is a crowd of their confrères-in-arms, habilimented too, as thou observest, in the naval uniform of their respective periods. That grizzled old sea-dog of many victories, who acts as the cynosure of the company, is Admiral Sir Andrew Wood, the favoured and honoured and coveted of princes, and ranged about him are Admirals Walker, Schanck, and Durham, with Rear-Admiral Black holding the hand of Captain Black, his brother, in friendly grasp, on the one side; and on the other, Sir Frederick Maitland of Rankeillour—the interceptor of Napoleon, with Sir Samuel Greig half-Scot, half-Russian, and Captains Chiene, Gray, Mitchell, and the Brothers Nairne of Pittenweem."

Again my Guide stopped, and now bade me direct my attention to the opposite corner of the picture where a ridge of frowning and precipitous rocks rose high into the air, round whose abysmal base rushed a gulfy and darkly-flowing torrent —the River of Tartarus, or the Infernal Regions. On the cliff-heads were seated a number of winged creatures who, I was told, were the angelic guards. In the midst sat Gabriel the Chief, his countenance overspread with a look of infinite pity; and immediately in front of him an archangel was busy weighing the vices and virtues of mankind. His upturned hand and sad expressive face showed the intensity of his concern at the

great preponderancy of evil. For a while I was thus left to meditate in silence upon the wonderful vision before me. Then once more the Angel resumed her explanation.

"Seest thou, behind the Supreme of the Shining Ones, another angel surrounded by the pastors of the Master's flocks? To them he is explaining the analogy between natural and revealed religion. The shepherd nearest the angel is Dr Thomas Chalmers, and beside him stand the brave Cameron, Walter Balcanquhal, Alexander Henderson, Henry Balnaves, Dr Cook, Dr Hunter, Baron Balvaird, and Bishops Traill, Wilson, Walker, Wardlaw, and Sage. On the outskirts of the company two men are engaged in a heated discussion. The haughty and wrathful cleric with the mitre is Cardinal David Beaton, the arch-monster of the anti-Reformation party; the other, calm and collected, but earnest, Dean Thomas Forret, the martyr of Inchcolm, who is endeavouring to persuade the archbishop that his ways have not been just what a *Legate a latere* or Vice-pope's should be. And to help the martyr drive the accusation straight home, the heroes and heroines of the Covenant stand at the gentle Dean's elbow, his ardent abettors. Dost thou observe them? In the foreground are Lady Culross *née* Melville, the noble Duchess of Rothes, who so often guarded her protégés from her husband's hawks; Lady Cavers, Lady Athernie, Lady Campbell, Amelia Geddie—the girl-whig, and to the rear of these are Andrew Gulland and William Murdoch—princes of humble birth, and with them John Davidson, Balfour of Kinloch, and Hackston of Rathillet, whose heart the executioner held aloft before the multitude and shouted, "This is the heart of a traitor!" Therein the grim minion of the law did err, for it was the heart of a true if somewhat resolute and daring man."

I was now bidden direct the telescope towards the top of the picture, where, in the most advanced part there appeared, as it were, the sea lashing itself laboriously against an iron-bound coast dotted here and there with rude, very rude village huts.

As I looked aged priest-like men seemed to rise out of the very ground, but after a closer inspection I could make out that the coast was pierced in several places by numerous caves. "These," said my companion in answer to my inquiring glance, "are the dwellings of Fife's early Christians—the Culdees, servants of the Most High, whom men call troglodytes or cave-dwellers, but who in heaven are known as saints. There is the good St. Serf, the foremost of them—a mighty pillar on the Lord's side, and with him are princely Kentigern, the patron-saint of Glasgow, and St. Adrian whom the Danish sea-rovers butchered in cold blood on the Isle of May, and, hand in hand, St. Monan and Conacher."

From the right hand corner above there shone forth a great and glorious blaze of light which diffused itself over the whole picture. In the fulness of this blaze was a group of men to whom an angel was making a diagnosis of all the ills that the flesh is heir to, especially of those which suddenly snap the frail thread of human life. They belonged to the medical profession. I was told their names:—Professor Syme, Dr Oswald and Dr Woodcock—both of whom, for the sake of their vocation, were cut off in the flower of their age, Dr Marshall, Dr Pitcairn, Dr John Mackie—called by the Italians *il celebre medico Inglese*, or the great English doctor, Dr Arnott, Sir George Campbell, Dr Duncan, Sir Andrew Balfour, and Dr Hannay-Cunningham—of fadeless memory.

All of a sudden the cinematographic diorama passed away—leftwards, methought, and I withdrew my eyes for a space from the vision-glass. "Look once again, O mortal," commanded the Angel.

I obeyed. The scene was changed. Away to the east, as one might say, the great rocks that separate the pre-Judgment world from the Infernal Regions rose in all their gaunt terribleness like adamantine battlements. The river below—the great river Tartarus, fretted and fumed like a fierce, fiery furnace; and amid the sulphurous flood, agonised by cataracts of tempestuous

fire, two hands appeared—one of them grasping a prong, the other pulling down a number of chained figures representing, the Angel told me, Discontent, Hypocrisy, Immorality, Tyranny, Superstition, Wantonness, Faithlessness, and Ambition. And floating down the roaring deluge were, amidst the multitudes, many whom men had called great;—there were crowned heads and mitred heads, figures in black cloth as well as figures accoutred in shining mail, besides many whose name was motley—some of them the very image of those whom I had, in the panoramic view, so lately beheld.

Lack-a-day! my surmises were only too true. Changed was the scene once more. Gone were the fearsome rocks, the awful chains, the penal fire—the former screen retook its place—but the canvas, it seemed to me, though still crowded, was less populated than before. Yes! I detected discrepancies here and there, and many vacant spots. It, too, passed away, and—well! I started in my sleep, rubbed my dreaming eyes, and beheld—not the heavenly visitant, but another angel—my dear wife—smiling calmly down upon me.

Sir Patrick Spens.

Uplifted on the surge, to heaven she flies,
Then thundering on the marble crags descends !
And, cracking, spreads in ruins o'er the tides.

—*Falconer's Shipwreck.*

"THE grand old ballad of Sir Patrick Spens," as the author of "The Ancient Mariner" has appropriately termed it, relates a sad event in Scottish history which antiquaries have been permitted to see through a glass, and that but very darkly indeed. There is such an air of romantic chivalry and loyal devotion about it that it captivates the heart rightaway, and the thorough sea going strain which pervades it has made it a favourite with all ranks and conditions of men. Pity it is that we know so very little concerning it. Its authorship we can only hap-hazardly conjecture, though expression and sentiment would place it, perhaps rightly, to the honour of Lady Wardlaw, the authoress of "Hardyknute." The date of its composition is likewise uncertain. If the work of Lady Wardlaw, its time can be definitely fixed; otherwise, it may be comparatively modern, or it may be as ancient as it is popular. The hero of it, too, springs before our vision as a shadowy form out of the mists of tradition and antiquity; neither history nor song makes further mention of him than the ballad contains; we see him, and we see him not.

But, though it is only thuswise that we behold "the skeely skipper, the best sailor that ever sailed the sea," what matters it? We feel his Jacktar spirit and resolution, his stout-heartedness, his knight-errantry none the less. And, though he went down to a watery grave, unhonoured save by his own

undaunted courage—uncoffined, except in the bark that sank with all its crew—and unknelled but by the wild restless waves of the Atlantic, the memory of him and his heroic companions is still enshrined in patriotic hearts, and future generations shall reiterate their fame.

The opening scene is laid in the pleasantly romantic city of Dunfermline. The summer of 1280 is gone, and the "yellow year" is fast ebbing away. In the Palace Royal of the "auld grey toon," which King Malcolm Caenmohr had erected two hundred odd years before as a home for his Saint-Queen Margaret, sits the good and brave monarch of the Scots, Alexander III.—the Tamer of the Ravens, his patriotic countrymen delight in calling him, from his conquering the sea-roving Norsemen, whose banners bore the device of a black raven on the wing—amongst his courtiers and ministers. The chivalry of Scotland are there; sages are there, men whose flowing white locks and stern, rugged features demonstrate how well they have weathered the storms of time and tempest. They are not holding high revelry, though the blood-red wine is being passed round; no, the question under weigh is a momentous one for Scotland.

Seventeen years previously Alexander had defeated Haco, the great sea-king of Norway, at Largs, robbing him of the monarchship of the Western Isles, which, since that time, have been under the domination of Scotland. Peace between the two countries had followed, and the strengthening of that peace was what the Scottish sovereign was just then contemplating. The marriage of his daughter, the Princess Margaret, with Eric, the Norwegian king, is to seal the compact, and he asks his attendants:—

"Oh! whaur will I get a skeely skipper,
To sail this ship o' mine?"

. . . .

Then up and spake an eldern knight,
Sat at the king's right knee;
"Sir Patrick Spens is the best sailor
That ever sailed the sea."

On hearing this, says the ballad, His Majesty wrote "a braid letter," and, after sealing it, despatched it with all haste to the famous mariner, whose home, it would appear, was situated near the charming little port of Aberdour, overlooking the Firth of Forth. When the king's messenger reached him, Sir Patrick was walking along the silvery strand of Aberdour, which stretches eastward in the direction of Burntisland and is known locally by the name of "The White Sands," and gazing over the broad and glassy expanse of waters he loved so well towards the hill and rock-throned city of Edinburgh. And as the knight reads his liege's mandate, perhaps he will pardon us if we look in curiosity over his shoulder to scan its contents.

"To Noroway ! to Noroway !
To Noroway o'er the faem !
The King's daughter to Noroway
'Tis thou maun tak' her hame."

The first line that Sir Patrick read,
A loud laugh laughèd he ;
The next line that Sir Patrick read,
The tear blinded his e'e.

Well might the "saut tear" blind the mariner's eye ! It was not that Spens was craven-hearted, but he dreaded the consequences to the Scottish princess of a winter voyage in the Northern seas, for the naval power of Scotland was as yet in its infancy, and our "floating citadels" were the sport of every wind and wave that rose and fell. So sadly was this the case that James III. passed a law that no ship should be freighted out of the country "fra the feast of St Simon and St Jude (Oct. 28th) unto the feast of the purification of Our Lady called Candelmess (Feb. 2nd)." It was this grim outlook that filled Sir Patrick's thoughts as he exclaimed :—

"Oh ! wha is he has dune this deed,
And tauld the king o' me—
To send us out, at this time o' the year,
To sail upon the sea ?

Be't wind or weet, be't hail or sleet,
Our ship maun sail the faem;
The king's daughter to Noroway
'Tis we maun tak' her hame."

On a Monday morning, continues the minstrel, more scrupulously particular in dates than minstrels are wont to be, Sir Patrick and his ill-fated crew hoisted their sails and bade farewell to their native land. Little did the brave seamen think that, as their good stout oaken ship ramped joyously over the bounding billows of the German Ocean, little did they think that they would never see that land or their pleasant homes again. Upon a Wednesday the vessel glided into the voes of Norway, and soon after Sir Patrick reached his destination. There was, of course, a time of merrymaking; but

They hadna been a week, a week,
A week but only twae,
When that the Lords o' Noroway
Began aloud to say—

"Ye Scotismen spend a' our King's gowd,
And a' our Queenis fee."
"Ye lee! ye lee! ye leears loud,
Fu' loudly do ye lee."

Spens loudly declares that the accusation is totally unfounded and base, and assures the Norwegian nobles that he has brought as much white money and good red gold from over the seas as will maintain himself and his men. Nevertheless, he bade his mariners make ready, for the ship would sail next day. One of the sailors advised him to tarry a little longer, saying -

"Now, ever alack! my master dear,
I fear a deadly storm!

I saw the new moon late yestreen,
Wi' the auld moon in her arm;
And if ye gang to sea, master,
I fear we'll come to harm."

Sir Patrick, however, was imperative, and so the anchors were weighed; but

"They hadna sailed a league, a league,
A league but only three,
When the lift grew dark, and the wind grew loud,
And gurly grew the sea."

The wild waves rose and swept over the beleaguered bark, crashing together overhead with a fearful sound, and threatening every minute to close round it like prison walls. Through the hearts of the brave Scottish seamen, even of the stout Sir Patrick, thrilled a doubt that chilled and froze their warm blood, as they tried in vain to combat the raging waters. Matters became worse. The anchor ropes snapped in twain, the topmasts lapped, and the angry, seething flood made great gaps in the sides of the broken ship. From the stern of the boat there was heard, above the clamorous roar of wind and wave, the loud cry of the captain:—

"Oh! whaur will I get a gude sailor
To tak' my helm in hand,
Till I win to the tall topmast
And see if I spy the land?"

And immediately, from one whose home had always been the world of waters, came back the reply:—

"O here am I, a sailor gude,
Will tak' the helm in hand,
Till ye win to the tall topmast,
But I fear ye'll ne'er spy land."

Then up an' cam' a mermaid
Wi' a siller cup in her hand;
"Sail on, sail on, my gude Scots lords,
For ye sune will see dry land!"

"Awa', awa', you wild woman,
And let your fleechin' be;
For, since your face we've seen the day,
Dry land we ne'er shall see!"

Sir Patrick had scarcely left his post to climb the rigging, when a bolt flew out of the ship's side, and the salt sea came

pouring in. He bade his men fetch "a web o' the silken claith" to stem the inrush of the waves;

But aye the sea came in.

Oh! laith, laith were the gude Scots lords
To weet their leathern shune;
But lang or a' the play was played,
They wat their hats abune.

And mony was the feather bed
That fluttered on the faem;
And mony was the gude Lord's son
That never mair cam' hame.

Half ower, half ower to Aberdour,
Full fifty fathoms deep,
There lies the gude Sir Patrick Spens,
Wi' the Scots lords at his feet.

Though the ballad thus vaguely terminates, it would seem that the shipwreck occurred off the ironbound coast of the Orcades or Orkney Islands, and that the bodies of Sir Patrick and his unfortunate sailors were washed ashore. In one of these islands—Papa Stronsa—is a large tumulus or burial-ground. There is no tradition, no legend connected with it—nothing but a name which has been transmitted from grandsire to sire, and from sire to son, for a period of six hundred years, and yet survives. That immemorial appellation, expressive in its very nudeness of historic record, is "The Grave of Sir Patrick Spens."

Oh! lang, lang may the ladies sit
Wi' their faces in their hand,
Or ere they see Sir Patrick Spens
Come sailing to the strand.

And lang, lang may the maidens sit
Wi' their gowd kaims in their hair,
A' waiting for their ain dear lords,
For them they'll see nae mair.

. . . . .

There is a great amount of controversial opinion anent the historical incident which the ballad relates. The view we have set forth—namely, that it refers to the nuptials of Alexander

III.'s daughter and King Eric of Norway, is refuted by antiquaries, who affirm, none too wisely, that Spens is a modern rather than an ancient Scottish name. Certainly we do not come across Sir Patrick's name in history, but Spens, on that account, must not be reckoned either an uncommon or modern name. On the contrary, it is both common and old. Little more than half a century after the loss of the Royal bark mention is made of William of Spens, who, at the siege of Dunbar in 1338, accomplished a remarkable feat, which Andro of Wyntoun takes notice of in his Cronykil of Scotland. He says:—

> And as they bicker'd there a' day,
> Of a great shot I shall you say,
> For that they had of it ferlie,
> I here to you rehearse will I.
> William of Spens percit a blasoun,
> And through threefold of habergeoun,
> And the actoun through the third ply,
> And the arrow in the body.

About the close of the same century, too, there appear in the Royal charters the names of Malicius and John and William de Spens. In the reign of James IV. Angus Bell-the-Cat slew in combat Spens of Kilspindie, an accomplished cavalier, with that

> huge and sweeping brand,
> Which wont of yore in battle fray
> His foemen's limbs to shred away
> As woodknife lops the sapling spray,

and which was handed to Lord Lindsay when he stepped out of the Reformation ranks on Carberry Hill to defy the mimic-sovereign Earl of Bothwell.

In the East Neuk of Fife stands the old country house of Wormiston, which belonged to the Spens family until Lord Lindsay acquired it in Queen Mary's reign. How often, indeed, does the fatality of things repeat itself!

Some writers have maintained that the ballad alludes to the expedition which was sent in 1290 under Sir Michael Scott, the warlock of Balwearie, to bring home the young Maid of Norway.

At first glance this view is quite untenable ; there was no king then to write a letter. There are also those who make the king's epistle to Sir Patrick read thus :—

"To Noroway ! to Noroway !
To Noroway o'er the faem !
The king's daughter of Noroway,
'Tis thou *maun bring* her hame."

The context of the ballad, however, precludes this version also, for the mission was accomplished when Spens reached Norway, and the expedition successful—at least as far as "half ower to Aberdour," the port from which it had sailed. And for the same reason the story can have nothing to do with the marriage of James III. with Margaret of Scandinavia, nearly two hundred years afterwards.

There be authors, too, who complain of the lack of historical authenticity, and aver that the ballad must be wholly fabulous, on the assumption that an expedition which terminated so melancholily—fifty "of the choicest gallants of the day and the highest nobles of the land" being drowned—should not be taken notice of in our chronicles. But wait a bit. Hear what Holinshead says :—"This year—*i.e.*, 1279 or 1280—a number of the Scotish nobilitie which had attended the ladie Margaret into Norway, were lost by shipwreck, as they would have returned back again to Scotland after the consummation of her marriage there with Hanigo or Aquine." Nor are earlier writers silent. According to Fordun, "many distinguished nobles who had accompanied the princess to grace her nuptials perished in a storm on their return." Among the shipwrecked courtiers was the Abbot of Balmerino.

An interesting story this, though obscured, alas ! with the misty vapours of the dim ante-past of time. It is only Sir Patrick Spens's shadowy form that rises up before our vision ; still we behold his rough, weather-beaten countenance, the fruit of a life on the ocean wave ; we feel his manly knighthood, and admire his untarnished Scottish character bristling with courage, honesty, and independence.

The Drama of Ash-Wednesday.

THE opening scene of the terrible tragedy about to be related is laid in the Borderland. On the banks of the silvery Tweed are encamped the flower of Scotland's chivalry. King James I. himself is there—the most gallant,

the most skilful, and the handsomest soldier in the whole army. Bravely defended by an English garrison under Sir Ralph Gray, the much-beleaguered Castle of Roxburghe frowningly defies the military skill and ardour of the Scottish host.

Hither and thither flits the iron-willed monarch, urging on the combatants to strenuous efforts, his bright sparkling eye already beaming with hopes of victory. The stronghold is just on the eve of capitulating when the Queen, Lady Jane Beaufort —King James's milk-white dove—arrives in the camp with the most startling news. A conspiracy, she assures her sovereign-lord, is being formed against his life; she tells him that an irruption is impending, and that the cabalists may be, nay, are likely to be, in the very camp. Further than that, she can tell him absolutely nothing.

On such grounds as these, the King abandoned the siege, much to the chagrin and surprise of the Scottish Army. There was murder in the air: James felt it, and no doubt he had reason to feel it. Not that he had done anything which a monarch was not entitled to do, but, coming home to his ancestral inheritance after a nineteen years' sojourn in England, he had unfortunately found a country steeped in lawlessness, dissatisfaction, and bloodshed. Moreover, he thoroughly understood, what so many of the Stuart race frequently forgot, that it was no easy task curbing the turbulent and haughty spirit of his peers—men who fought and wrangled with one another during great national emergencies, even when the sword of the invader was depending over them, men who would not hesitate, when provoked, to rise in arms against the father of their country, and hail with joy an opportunity of ridding themselves of a monarch whose rigorous methods of administering justice frustrated their own ambitious designs.

A brief résumé of James's reign will reveal to us the causes which led up to the awful episode of Ash-Wednesday, 1437. He was, you must understand, a native of the "auld grey toon" of Dunfermline, and the tragic event which robbed Scotland of the most enlightened prince Christendom could then boast of makes our Fifan blood tingle and surge uncontrollably through our veins, and our lips mutter deep and bitter anathemas on the heads of those who perpetrated such an act of

heathenish barbarity. In 1405 his father, the gentle King Robert, sent him to France to protect him from the nefarious machinations of his ambitious uncle, the Duke of Albany. Off Flamborough Head, however, the ship in which he sailed was attacked and captured by an English privateer, and the Scottish Prince spent the next nineteen years in captivity, a period of his existence which reads like a page torn out of a fairy tale.

Yet it was not all a life of idleness and pleasure and vanity. In thraldom James is reaping the fruits which dog the footsteps of boyhood adversities; his Royal qualities are developing; and by the time he obtains his release his knowledge of the technique of monarchical government is well-nigh complete. And, when he does come home, we witness the effects of his captive training—the emancipation of his subjects from the tyranny of oppressors and usurpers, the revival of learning, and the regulation of commerce. The country, however, has become a perfect topsy-turvydom of anarchy and violence. James immediately sets himself to reform, but his reforms, because severe, are disliked by the turbulent Barons, whose tastes and distastes have been pampered and coddled by crafty and vacillating regents.

Out of a rude and rugged realm, sunk in the deepest depravity, he begins to bring forth order and justice, and he does so with an unflinching and indomitable spirit of determination; declares that he will work a change in Scotland such as men little dream of, and that there is not a spot, even the wildest, in all his realm, where the key shall not keep the castle and the bracken-bush the cow. The nobles are astonished; they marvel; they murmur ominously; they thirst for the King's blood; but he is beforehand with them and seizes them. He must either utterly annihilate his enemies, or be consumed by them. Deeds of appalling atrocity demand dreadful retributions. He must, therefore, seize the bull by the horns, as the saying goes, and he finds it difficult and dangerous work indeed to curb the proud spirit of the unbridled and factious aristocracy.

When Parliament assembles at Perth in 1425 he suddenly arrests thirty of the most unruly barons, to whom he thinks he owes his galling captivity, executes the Duke of Fife and his two sons on the Heading Hill at Stirling, and when he proceeds to Inverness, two years afterwards, seizes forty of the Highland chieftains, imprisoning some, beheading others, and setting the innocent free. Severe though the King's measures were, who can point the finger of censure at him and say he was doing wrong? The people and the times demanded such rigorousness. But these transactions excite the greatest inquietude among the nobility, and the recoil is more pregnant, more direful in its results than the charge.

Just as every cloud has its silver lining, so also it has its dark side. Morning had shot its rosy pinions over a landscape of peace and prosperity; ere noon fleecy specks of clouds are seen athwart the sky, no bigger at first than a man's hand, but growing larger and larger as the hours increase, and finally breaking, as the night advances, with all the fury and devastation of a tornado. The King's life of usefulness is drawing to a close; his years, his days, his hours, are numbered—numbered by his foes. With this retrospective outline let us repair once more to the vicinity of Roxburghe Castle.

Having disbanded the army, James retired to Edinburgh, where his last Parliament met on All-Hallows, 1436. Thereafter the Court removed in great pomp to Perth to celebrate the approaching Christmas festivals. In those days the Dominican or Blackfriars Monastery served as a Royal residence: Parliaments were frequently held in it; and it was the meeting-place of the national ecclesiastical Councils. Thither the King repaired, and by the movement played himself into the hands of his enemies. It certainly does appear strange, in fact headstrong, that James, considering the superstitious age in which he lived, should have persisted in proceeding to St. John's Town, for it was just like walking into a lion's den.

Prophets had predicted that a king of Scotland was to be

slain that year; and, to emphasise the fact on James's mind, a Highland woman met him just as he was about to cross the Tay and hailed him with these discomforting words, "My Lord King, if you pass over this water, you shall never return again alive." And, the ancient historians affirm, phenomenons of portentous birth supported their prophecies. Heaven had measured out his span of life, and his kingdom was to be shivered into fragments. Towards the close of the year a comet suddenly flamed forth in the firmament like a great sword of fire. About the same time there was also an eclipse of the sun that lasted for three hours, during which a midnight darkness overspread the land. Their memory has been transmitted from generation to generation under the name of the *black hours* of Scotland. So intense, too, was the frost that ale and wine were sold in blocks. In the minds of the Scottish people all these wonderful signs pointed to a dreadful catastrophe.

Meantime the King, heedless of the woman's prophetic warning, has entered the Fair City, and the festivities immediately begin. Meantime, too, the conspirators are cautiously and noiselessly maturing their plans, preparatory to striking the decisive blow which is to launch the King and his consort into eternity. Only the fateful day remains to be fixed.

Ash-Wednesday draws nearer and nearer; the eventful night at length arrives. Within the monastery all is festal revelry, and amid the gay throng of Scottish beauty and Scottish chivalry the gayest and gallantest is the King himself. He is the cynosure—the great magnet of that brilliant assembly. There are bright eyes there, as James sings and plays as only he can do—eyes now dimmed with tears of love and joy, so soon to be exchanged for tears of grief and lamentation. The barbarians are at the gate.

> 'Tis said, as through the aisles they pass'd,
> They heard strange voices on the blast;
> And through the cloister-galleries small,
> Which at mid-height thread the chancel-wall,
> Loud sobs, and louder laughter, ran.

> And voices unlike the voice of man ;
> As if the fiends kept holiday,
> Because their spoils were brought to day.

Outside the convent the arch-traitor, Sir Robert Graham, was lurking under cover of the darkness. Words stumble and refuse to move, from sheer helplessness, in the delineation of a character so perfidious and deeply dyed with crime. Among the courtiers that evening were the Earl of Athol, James's uncle, and his grandson, Sir Robert Stuart, for whom, it is said, the King had always entertained a very warm regard. Both of them were resolved on the destruction of their kinsman, and, as we shall see presently,

> The hand that mingled in the meal,
> At midnight drew the felon steel,
> And gave his host's kind breast to feel
> Meed for his hospitality.

During the festivities, which had been prolonged longer than usual, the Highland prophetess once more appeared upon the scene demanding audience with her Sovereign. "Let her come to-morrow," said James, thinking it was only some trifling affair. Alas ! for James there was no to-morrow.

About midnight the King withdrew to his own apartment, and was standing in deshabille before the fire-place twaddling with the Queen and her attendants when suddenly the lurid gleam of torches flared through the room. For a minute or two there was an ominous silence. The courtiers listened with bated breath and hushed whispers. Then as the clangour of steel and the tumult of armed men waxed louder and nearer, they looked at one another in terror and consternation. All the predictions of evil flashed instantaneously through James's mind. His first endeavour was to seek safety in flight, and he looked eagerly round to see if there was any possibility of escape. He sprang towards the window, but it was securely stanchioned on the outside. Nearer and nearer came the wolves thirsting for the blood of their prey, and their shouts of exultation assured James that nothing but his life would satisfy them. In a

frenzy of despair he seized the fire-tongs, and, wrenching up a plank from the floor which covered a small disused vault, dropped himself through the aperture. Still he was a prisoner, for, as fate would have it, just three days previously he had ordered the window of the vault to be built up to prevent the tennis balls from entering it when that game was being played in the garden.

Stuart, the King's Chamberlain, had undertaken to conduct the conspirators to his master's room. No sooner had they obtained ingress than he led the way. A page, named Walter Straiton, cup-bearer to His Majesty, perceived the plotters in earnest consultation, and, shouting, "Treason! Traitors!" hastened to bar the door. But he paid the penalty of his faithfulness,—a ruffian's sword immediately drank his blood. His cries, however, had aroused the inmates of the Royal apartment. With one accord they rushed to the door to secure it, and to their horror found that the bolts had been destroyed. Nothing daunted, one of the Maids of Honour, Lady Katherine Douglas, heroically thrust her arm into the place where the bar should have been, while the other ladies tried to stem the rush of the assailants by planting themselves behind the door.

In a trice the barricade gave way, the delicate arm snapped, the bone was shivered into atoms, and the conspirators thronged in, trampling down the fair defenders in their fury, and slaying those who offered any resistance. No King was there; only a Queen, who stood petrified and speechless. A cowardly villain was on the point of aiming a blow at her when a son of Sir Robert Graham grasped him by the arm, exclaiming, "What! shame on you! She is but a woman. Let us go and seek the King."

Every corner of the apartment was scrupulously examined, yet without success. The traitors proceeded to search the other rooms, when Christopher Chambers, a domestic, who had been bribed, suddenly recollected the vault and shouted to his associates, "Why stand dallying thus? Come with me, and

I shall soon discover where the King is." And so, leading the way back to the Royal chambers, he bounded towards the replaced board and lifted it up, crying with a savage and fiendish shout of joy, "Come, the bride is found, for whom we have been searching all night long."

The fury of the conspirators increased tenfold at the sight of their prey. One of them, Sir John Hall, at once leaped down with a dagger in his hand. The King hurled him headlong amongst the dust. Hall's brother followed and struck at James, but he, too, shared the same fate, and for many a long day these traitors carried on their throats marks which were known as "the King's fingers." In vain did the monarch endeavour to wrench their daggers from them. With a fierce cry of exultation Graham, the arch-monster, sprang upon his exhausted and defenceless foe. When the King appealed to him for mercy, the regicide raised his dagger and pointed it against his enemy's breast. "Thou cruel tyrant," he said, "never didst thou show mercy to those of thy own blood, nor to any other gentleman who came in thy way. No mercy shalt thou have now."

"Then," entreated the King, "for the salvation of my soul, I beseech thee to let me have a confessor."

"No," cried the implacable fiend, "no other confessor shalt thou have but this dagger," saying which, he plunged the weapon up to the hilt into the body of the King, who immediately fell, crying for mercy, and promising half of his kingdom for his life. The other assassins were at once upon him, lacerating his body in the most diabolical manner. On his corpse were counted no fewer than twenty-eight wounds—truly a sad spectacle for all who beheld it.

Thus perished James Stuart, the most enlightened prince that Scotland ever possessed. Scotsmen assuredly are proud of him. His untiring zeal and ability in administering justice, his courtesy, his humanity, his affability, made him the darling of his people. None of his subjects, not even the poorest of them, were afraid to lay their grievances before him, for they

were sure of a patient hearing and a sincere decision. A man he was of all men the most dignified and commanding; respect-inspiring, yet zealously sympathetic; manly, magnanimous; vigorous in authority, yet courteously hospitable; a hater of all evil, a lover of everything good; courageous, independent, noble; a master with the sword, and unsurpassably an adept in archery and in the feats of strength and skill, yet as unsurpassably a brilliant master of the harp: brimfully mirthful: studious—an expert in French, Latin, rhetoric, and theology, deeply versed in governmental philosophy: a sportsman, a gardener, a mechanic, an architect, a scholar—all in one: excellently just, if needfully severe: unyieldingly faithful, tenderly unselfish: a man filled to repletion with a remarkable sense of peace and equity, to which he was pre-eminently a martyr—a champion cut down in the midst of a great cause by being assassinated while defenceless. Such was James I.—the poet-King, the peace reformer and civiliser of Scotland—such a ruler of mankind as the world has seldom, if ever, seen.

The body of the unfortunate monarch was buried in the church of the Carthusian Monastery, which he himself had founded eight years before. And what of the regicides? A terrible retribution was theirs. The Earl of Athol, hoary-headed though he was, was bound to a pillar and a coronet of red-hot iron placed upon his head, with this inscription:—"Here stands the King of Traitors!"—thereby fulfilling the Highland prophecy that, ere he died, he should be crowned before a great concourse of people. On the third day he was dragged at a horse's tail to the place of execution, where, Balfour tells us, his heart was cut out and roasted in a fire before his eyes, and then cast to the dogs to eat.

Young Stuart, whose eyes had been dazzled by the vision of a throne, was hanged and quartered. Graham, the grand executioner—he who had concocted the whole plot, who had renounced his allegiance to the King, and threatened his life times without number, who was the first to plunge his dagger

into James's heart—he endured, as it was meet he should, the most revolting torments. Like Athol, he was dragged through the streets backward; the fleshy parts of his body were seared with pincers to the very bones; his heart was cast into a fire; and his body, after being quartered, sent, as were those of his accomplices, to the principal towns of the country. And so bitter and hateful was the remembrance of him that, for generations, the Scottish people called down maledictions on his head.

Robert Graham,
Wha slew our king
God gie him shame!

The Wife o' Auchtermuchty.

LIST! matrons and benedicts, ye who have braved unitedly the storms of the years. List! maidens and youths who still bask in the radiant beams of single blessedness. And all ye who contemplate planting your feet down on the threshold of matrimonial life to take up the cares of a household, give ear!

> In Auchtermuchty there dwelt ane man—
> An husband, as I hard it tauld—
> Wha weill could tippil oot a can,
> And naither luvit hunger nor cauld.

A very, very ordinary husband indeed, you conclude, was this man. Yes, without a doubt he was. None of us care exceedingly much for cold, and far less for hunger; the wintry storms may blow and howl, and the wolf—the snarling wolf of painful want, may prowl about the door, and we, like the wife of Auchtermuchty's husband, strive our level best to arrest his ingress. But, please, do not prejudge this worthy morsel of humanity.

Wait a bit. One morning, as he had often done before, he yoked his plough for the day's work. Methinks it was one of those bleak November days when there is nothing save scowling blasts and chilling rains. Glad, indeed, was Farmer John—let us, for convenience' sake, call him John!—when the shadows of evening fell over the landscape and put an end to his labours. At the furrow he "lowsit" the plough, and drove the oxen home. Tired with the day's moil, perishing with cold and

hunger, and drenched through and through with the rain which had but laughed at the efforts his coarse homespuns had made to keep it out, a blazing fire and the "ingle blinkin' bonnily" greeted the farmer with a right cheering welcome. Many a man's heart would have been gladdened at the sight. Not so John's.

Whan he came in he lukit ben,
And saw his wife baith dry and clene,
Sittin' at the fyre beik and bauld,
With ane fat soup as I heard say;
The man being very weit and cauld,
Between they twa it was na play.

John was the archetype of a multitude of men in this world who, when they come home at even, imagine that their wives' profession is by far the easiest and simplest in the whole wide universe. Poor creatures! they, as a matter of course, never see one tithe of what the goodwife has been doing during their absence; and when Madame Huswife declares to her "lord and master" that a woman's work is never ended, and begins to expatiate on the long rigmarole of little things, one thousand and one and more, that demand daily attention—why, he just laughs at her. To honest John's mind that night, however, the matter was not for laughing at.

The homely picture of his wife sitting comfortably by the fire only tended to increase his wretchedness, and, to boot, rouse the sleeping dog within him. It suddenly struck him to ask himself why he should be exposed to the icy winds while his wife sat—John believed she sat—snug and cosy at home? And why it was for her that something hot was always at hand, and not for him? Why should she be so comfortable, while he had to go out day after day, be it fair or foul, in oppressive mud-bedraggled garments, and return home at night starving and miserable, and with nothing to reflect on but the adversity of fate—oh, that he were a woman!—and the prospect of as wretched an existence to-morrow? John cursed the Fates, and made up his mind that he would stand it no longer; he would

be a woman, and try his hand at the housekeeping, and that before another day's sun had cycled its course.

Quoth he, "Where is my horsis corn?
My ox has naithir hay nor stray!
Dame, ye maun to the pleuch the morn,
I sall be hussy gif I may!"

Dame Joanna consents with ready will to the arrangement, and at the same time gives her guidman instructions how he is to conduct himself. "Husband," said she, while a naughty twinkle sparkled in her eye, "I am content to tak' the pleuch day about wi' ye. So ye shall rule baith calves and kye, and all the house baith out and in. And since ye wald housewifery ken, ye shall first sift and then knead, and aye as ye gang but and ben ye shall tak' care that the bairns getna into mischief. And I beseech ye, luk eifter the gaislings that the greedy gled tak's them not." Having received these directions and committed them to memory, as we shall see, John retired to bed.

The wyfe was up richt late at e'en—
I pray God gife her weil to fare!
She kirn'd the kirn, and skum'd it clene,
Left the gudeman but bledoch bare.

Under the eaves the sparrows were twittering their good-mornings. and in the yard the cock was crowing his loudest to herald the dawning of day, as the lady of the house got up, according to agreement, to prepare for the labours of the field. And ere she departed she put in her lap, remarks the poet, as much as would have served them all at noon. To the plough-boy, whom she apparently has enlisted on her side, she says:—

"Jock, be thou maister of wark,
And thou sall haud, and I sall ka;
I'se promise thee ane guid new sark,
Outhir of round claith or of sma'."
She lowsit the oxin, aught or nine,
And hynt ane gad-staff in her hand;
Up raise the gudeman after syne,
And saw the wife had dune command.

Anon he, too, entered upon his new duties, but alack and

alack! like everybody else who knows more about every other body's business than his own, he began to bungle straightaway. And surely it is the grim irony of fate that misfortunes never come singly.

He caw'd the gaislings furth to feid—
  There was but sevensume of them a',
And by their cumis the gredy gled,
  And likkis up fyve—left him but twa.
Then out he ran, in all his mane,
  How sune he heard the gaislings cry;
But than or he cam in agane
  The calves brak loose and sucked the ky.

This interesting performance (interesting to the calves) took place in "the loan." 'Twas a play, however, that John had no relish for. He seized a stick and hastened to disperse them, but an ill-willy cow, catching sight of the would-be mistress, displayed a most immodest affection for John's oft-saturated nether garments, and dispersed them instead before he could say Jack Robinson. In pain, and with the blood streaming down his legs, he ran home "to reel the twill" which his wife had spun the previous day. And ever as he tried the spinning of it there echoed through the kitchen the weary, sad refrain—"Ah! me, this work has ill beginnin'," for the novel woman had sat down too near the fire, and the "wee pickle tow" was soon aflame, and that was the end of it. The "bledoch bare" —*i.e.*, the skimmed milk—next claimed his attention.

Hynd to the kirn than did he stour,
  And jumlit at it till he swat;
When he had fumlit a full lang hour
  The sorrow a scrape of butter he gat.
Albeit na butter he could get,
  Yet he was cummerit with the kirn;
And syne he het the milk owre het,
  And sorrow a spark of it wald yirn.

Everything goes wrong with him. He sets the scalded milk down to cool, but the pig, scenting the fragrance of the delicacy, is tempted hither; and aye as the porcine brute winked its rheumy eyes and thirstily drank of the lacteal fluid—what

matter to it though it had a burnt tastiness?—the water-mark, so to speak, of the vessel fell lower and lower. At length John, on whom an unconscious fit seemed to have fallen, awakened to a sense of his surroundings. Struck with blank wonderment at porker's audacity, he snatched up a crooked club that lay near him, and hurled it with all his might at the marauder.

Alas! "many a shaft at random sent finds mark the archer little meant." The missile missed the pig, but laid low the two goslings—by the by, the whole gosling family which the establishment now boasted of, and which had wandered in uninvited at the open door. Matters go from bad to worse. The children get beyond his control, and then he thinks it time, high time, the mistress of the house herself was at home to manage affairs.

Then he gat up on ane knowe heid,
On hir to cry, on hir to schout;
She hard him—and she hard him not,
But stoutly steired the stottis about.
She drave all day unto the nicht,
She lowsit the pleuch, and syne came hame,
She fand all wrang that sould been richt—
I trow the man thocht richt grit shame.

To speak the truth, poor luckless John did think shame, black-burning shame. But he did more. He had the courage to acknowledge that he was beaten, his awkward incompetency to rule the house, and promised never afterwards to meddle with what he knew absolutely nothing about, at the same time declaring that he would put a house to wreck were he but twenty days goodwife. "Ye can jist stay in it noo, John, whan ye've dune sae weel," said his spouse, "for I will ne'er accept it." "Ye'll maybe be glad enough to get it yet," was John's tartish and nettling rejoinder.

Then up she gat ane meikle rung,
And the guidman maid to the door;
Quoth he, "Dame, I sall hald my tung,
For an we fecht I'll get the waur."

Quoth he, "When I forsuik my pleuch
I trow I but forsuik mysell;
And I will to my pleuch agane,
For I and this house will neir do well."

The ballad is but another verifying instance of the old adage that experience teaches fools, yea, even though they are old fools, and be this the moral of the story:—Let not envy suggest and imagine things which have no existence whatever.

Husband! just a word to thee. Be not puffed up in thine own conceits; spare a spark of credit, at least, to thy wife's abilities, for she, you know, since that fateful marriage-day is counted your other, sometimes your better, half. Imagine not that her labours are light, though love lightens labour, nor cast a malignant eye on the professions of others, thinking theirs so remarkably easy, and thine own correspondingly difficult. Envy, like Dame Gossip, is a wayward, roving, passionate being that slumbereth not, nor even resteth; and the malevolent man, says Plautus, is also the meddlesome man, or the other way about. Be not included, then, in that category, as was the consort of the Wife o' Auchtermuchty, ever chanting to thyself a mournful *Quanta patimur*—what sufferings are ours!—for, of a surety, the day will come when thy awkwardness and thy glaring incapability will be brought to book, as were those of that hapless mortal whom Experience made a wiser if not a happier man.

Tradition ascribes the poem to King James V. There seems, however, to be no substantial proof in any work extant supplying us with a key to its authorship, excepting, perhaps, the powerful resemblance which exists between "The Wife o' Auchtermuchty" and the other ballads written by that scholarly prince, where the topics, and the phraseology, and the portrayal of the people and their manners are so very much alike as to warrant such a conclusion. As a rule, the Royal James places his principal characters in the most laughable and ludicrous predicaments. Compare, for example, the *dramatis personæ* in "The Gaberlunzie Man" and "The Jolly Beggars."

Among Scottish people this ballad of "The Wife o' Auchtermuchty" has always been a great favourite. Yet, singularly enough, our ballad collectors, while raking up our old songs—a thing they have done, by the way, "to the very lees"—have, for some inexplicable reason, very often overlooked it. Indeed, very few are the books in which we do stumble across it. Why this should be is a mystery. The best of our ancient songs are those of humour—broad, simple, pawky genuine humour, set to ranting, rollicking tunes, and, therefore, "highly acceptable to all lovers of innocent frolic and social glee." At the head of this class might be placed "The Wife o' Auchtermuchty," and, to keep it company, alongside the poems already mentioned, "The Auld Man's Mare's Dead"—the story of an old, miserable, bare-boned, multi-ailing jade of a beast that wonderfully died, though 'twould have been a mystery and a miracle had it lived. In the old poems, it is true, there may be to this refined and cultured age some inadmissible expressions. But, let us urge, are such productions to perish, when a judicious and not too lavish pruning might strip them of any indelicacy which would give offence to modest ears and modester feelings, and yet, at the same time, retain entire their simple and native rustic humour?

Beardie, the Tiger-Earl.

AMID the hills in the north of Fife, and about three miles from the county town, stand the ruins of Lordscairnie, or, as it is commonly called, Earl Beardie's Castle.

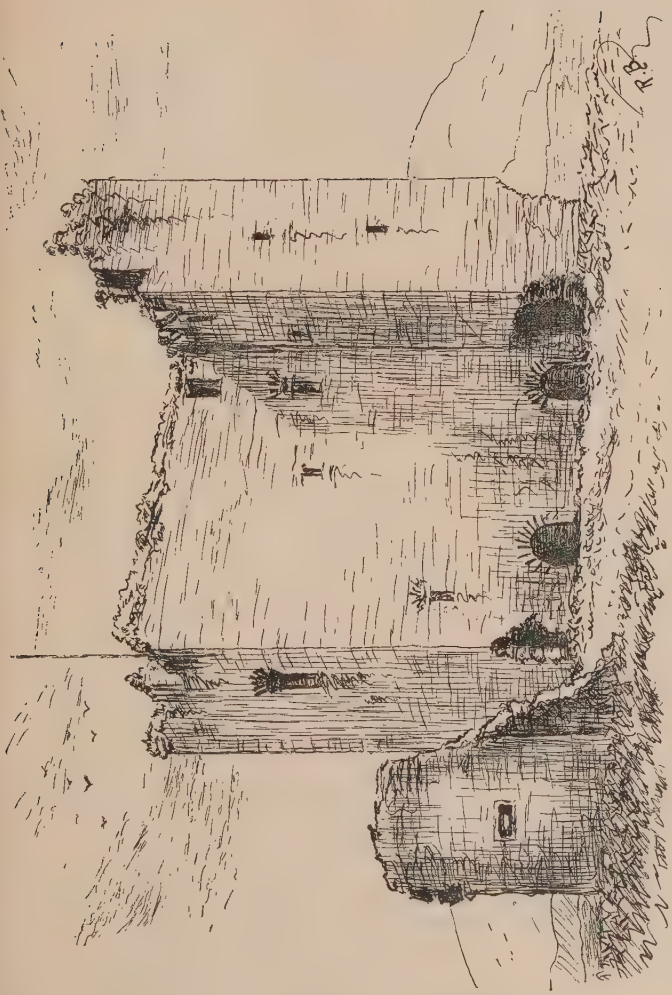
> Grayly draped
> With streaming grass, appears, low built but strong,
> The ruinous donjon as a knoll of moss,
> The battlement overtopt with ivytods,
> A home of bats, in every tower an owl.

For centuries it has stood the attacks of the ruthless fingers of Father Time, and, though now a mouldering ruin, is still magnificent in its grim decay.

A rough, tumble-down, wild-catlike feudal knight was the builder of it, Alexander, Earl Crawford, a scion of the "antique race" of the Lindsays, and traditionally great-great-great-grandson—many times over—of Thor, the ancient Scandinavian deity, and therefore of Fornioter, the mythological King of the North.

> Honoured and feared he was, but little loved ;
> For e'en his bounty bore a show of sternness,
> And when his passion's roused, he was a Sathan
> For wrath and injury.

He lived during the reigns of the early Jameses—that is, four and a half centuries ago. His contemporaries spoke of him as "The Tiger," on account of his ferocious disposition, or, as the early manuscripts have it, *dictus Tigris, qui totam Angusiam in subiectione tenuit*—because he held the whole of Angus in thraldom. He was also nicknamed "Earl Beardie" from his great beard, though one authority states that he was well



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LORDSCAIRNIE CASTLE, FROM N. E.

known by the designation of "Beard the best of them," referring to the irreverence which he entertained for King James's courtiers.

The Earl was one of those petty, though powerful, princes who, in those troublous times, ruled Scotland, and who, in mutual league, would brook no curb, and hesitated not in defying even the authority of the Sovereign himself. Foolhardy and braggart at times he seems to have been. When his great antagonist, the Earl of Huntly, defeated him on Ascension Day 1452, at Brechin, through the treachery of one of his vassals, the Tiger exclaimed on reaching the Castle of Finhavèn "that he would be content to hing seven years in hell by the breers o' the e'e" (*i.e.*, the eyelashes) could he but pay back his enemy, tooth for tooth, for that day's dishonour. On that occasion the Lindsay soldiers were dressed in green; hence arose the superstitious proverb that

A Lindsay with green
Should never be seen!

Apparently it was the Earl's pride more than his power that had been hurt by this reverse, for soon after he stormed through Angus, launching forth his terrific vengeance on those who had deserted his cause or refused him their aid, devastating their estates, razing their strongholds, and leaving only desolation and ruin in his train. A few months later—the Douglasses, who had been Beardie's staunchest allies, having meanwhile been compelled to lay down their arms—the Earl went Gibeonitishly to the King, clad in old and tattered garments, bareheaded and barefooted, threw himself at his liege's feet, and, with floods of tears and an avalanche of sobbing and sighing that choked back the pitiful petition, prayed for mercy, which the King in his clemency freely and frankly extended to him.

Thus the wild renegade knight was subdued and became "ane faithful subject and sicker targe to the King"; but the reconciliation was of very short duration, for the Earl died in

September 1453, and was buried *regiâ prope pompâ*—with princely pomp—in the Greyfriars of Dundee, beside the ashes of his forefathers.

The good that men do "is often interred with their bones"; so has it been with the Tiger-Earl. What few redeeming features his lawless character possessed tradition has written in water. His repentance, sincere and self-reproachful as it certainly was, has disappeared in the mists of time, but tradition has cradled and nurtured, for generations yet unborn, the story of the Tiger-Earl's Doomsday encounter with the Arch-enemy of mankind.

Let it be understood that Beardie was an adept at the "deil's buiks." We should say nowadays that he was an expert gambler—a gamester to overcome whom at dice, or cards, or table was a task and a half indeed. In a moment of recklessness he had sworn that he would play at cards on the Sabbath Day with whoever should dare—ay, even though the Evil One himself were to appear.

It was the Ides of March when the Tiger threw his vaunting challenge in the teeth of heaven and earth, and already one could faintly hear the pinion-flap of the equinoctial gales. A fortnight later the storm broke. The intervening days had been stormy ones, too, for the Earl. He had been raging through Angus on his devastating career, but things, somehow or other, had not gone so well with him, and he withdrew to the Castle of Glamis to recuperate. Still he felt dull—an evil destiny seemed ever to be dogging his footsteps as pertinaciously as his own shadow—and on the Sabbath following his return he retired after dinner to his well-appointed playroom for rest—perhaps to listen to the battling storm without, which struck just then a chord responsive to his own ruffled feelings.

Scarcely had he entered the room when he became conscious that his was not the only presence there. Casting his keen eyes round the apartment, the fitful light of the tapers revealed to his steady gaze a man of towering stature, majestic countenance,

and baleful eyes that seemed to burn with fire. Yet there was about him an air of stately melancholy, and Beardie felt that he stood face to face with the Chief of the Fallen Cherubim. No sound had heralded the stranger's entrance.

> In shape and gesture proudly eminent
> He stood—a tower; his form had not yet lost
> All his original brightness, nor appear'd
> Less than Archangel ruin'd, and th' excess
> Of glory obscured.
> His blazing eyes, like two bright shining shields,
> Did burne with wrath, and sparkled living fyre,
> As two broad beacons, set in open fields,
> So flamed his eyne with rage and rancorous yre;
> But far within, as in a hollow glade,
> Those glaring lamps were set that made a dreadful shade.

He was apparelled in graceful attire, well befitting such a playroom as that which Beardie possessed. His mysterious and startling appearance, however, altogether discomposed the Earl, whose fingers involuntarily sought the hilt of his sword, while all the time he regarded him with rivetted eyes as he would some venomous reptile.

"Nay! forbear, foolish knight! thou canst not injure me," said the Arch-fiend of the Powers of Darkness in his most mincing tones, and he favoured the Tiger with a look that might have withered a more dauntless man than he. "I have heard of thy vain boast, and now am I come to pick up the gauntlet which thou hast so ruthlessly thrown down. Until the shadows of night are fled away, and the cock proclaims the approach of the morning, so long, and no longer, shall this warfare of ours last."

"Amen!" grunted the Earl, for he despised the fiend more than he actually feared him. "When the shadows begin to fall aslant the earth towards the west, thou sayest, must we stop. So be it. I hold thee to thy word, and thou shalt fail, Auld Nickie-ben—thou shalt fail." Thus spake the Earl vauntingly, though racked with dark forebodings.

"And if thou failest—if thy attempt should prove vain, as I

am sure it will," said Satan with measured sarcasm, a sinister smile meanwhile distorting his countenance, "thou shalt be

> . . . . . hurled headlong down
> To bottomless perdition ; there to dwell
> In adamantine chains and penal fire."

The Tiger's lip curled with bitter scorn. "Great's your pooer, I ken," he replied. "Aft-times I've heard the douce, honest craiturs hereaboots tell hoo they've heard ye rustlin' through the boortrees on dreary wintry nichts, or flyin' on the wings o' the tempest, or hauntin' the lonely bypaths to lure poor benighted vagabonds to their destruction. Na, faith, Auld Nickie-Ben, thou'rt neither bleart, nor blate, nor blind."

Beardie paused, and the Demon looked at him with an amused smile.

"I've heard the story, too," the Knight went on, "hoo ye played your spitefu' pranks, ye auld twa-faced scoondrel, on Adam and his fair sweetheart Eve, in the bonnie gairden o' Paradise, an' a'maist sent the lot o' us to everlastin' condemnation. Ay, an' just an 'oor or twa ago ye sklented your cursed jokes on my canty, crouse henchman, guid Dauvit Bethune, wha never yet did onything or onybody harm. He happened to hear your eerie drone bummin' along the dykeside, an' cam' rinnin' in wi' his hair standin' on end like a hedgehog's quills. Guidsakes ! ye nearly frichtened the life oot o' him. My hert was wae for the honest carle."

A silence deep as death followed this harangue of the warlike Earl who seldom gave vent to such lengthy orations. Then Michael answered—"Nevertheless, you cannot gainsay the firmness of my conquests. Here I have come to avenge no injury. No ! revenge is not in my line ; 'tis a thing I scorn with implacable hatred. Use all thy powers, haughty chieftain ; employ all thy arts, thy devices, thy strategy, but take heed lest thy over-weening peacockishness have a terrible downcoming."

And so the strife commenced—fallen angel and fallen man,

the immortal and the mortal, confronting each other in deadly feud.

Outside the wind howled furiously, ending ever and anon in a low and dreadful wail. The massive battlements quivered before the mocking ire of its rushing pinions, which startled the night birds and made them scream dolefully. But the combatants inside the castle heard none of these sounds. They shuffled and cut and dealt the cards; trick followed trick, and game followed game; they played and finessed and forced—silently, warily, unceasingly.

The hours sped past; seven—eight—nine. For a while they ceased playing, the odds, if anything, against Beardie. On his brow stood great beads of perspiration. He rose, and walked to a side-table on which was a bell. He rung it sharply, and a servant instantly appeared. "Here, set afore us a flagon o' wine, an' tak' care ye dinna keep us waitin'."

The servant, instead of complying, stared in blank astonishment at his master, unable either to move or speak. His dumbfoundered gaze wandered from his lord's perspiring face to the table upon which, at either extremity, lay the cards. At one end they were being toyed with by an invisible hand. Superstitious awe seized hold of him, as a faint mocking laugh smote upon his ear.

"Speak, knave! What's the maitter wi' ye?" demanded the Earl, livid with rage. "Bring the wine at once, and some snaps."

The man hastily withdrew, and in a minute or two re-entered, bearing in one hand a massive goblet embossed with holy angels and filled with the choicest wine, and in the other a platter covered with the nicest home-made snaps, which formed a tit-bit with Earl Crawford. Nickie-Ben glanced at the angelic ornamentation on the flagon, and his fierce eyes flashed fire. The vassal in amazement retired.

"Queer churl that," remarked the Arch-fiend, the moment the door had closed. "One would think that he and I were

great strangers. Ha! ha! ha! Tiger! Last week I helped him in his wolfish villainy while thou wert at Brechin. Ha! ha! ha! He shall know more of me hereafter." And Auld Hornie laughed a horrid, unearthly laugh as he said this. "Better success this time, Sir Knight, or may Heaven help you!"

The Earl grinned self-confidently. His pride was matchless. The effort, however, was too much. The hot wine and the hotter snaps went down the wrong road, and burned his throat. Springing to his feet with a yell of pain and rage, and an awful imprecation, he spluttered and cursed in turn, gnashing his teeth furiously together.

"Sit down, friend," said Nickie-Ben in his most mellow tones.

Beardie obeyed the injunction, and they set to again, as earnestly as before, deftly frisking the cards over the table. Many a time had the Earl played at cards, but never in such a game as this. Often had he lost, as often, oftener indeed, had he gained, but to-night the chances seemed so much against him that he began to feel irreclaimably degraded and ashamed of himself. And with his embarrassment fled his satiety. He made a desperate effort to recover his lost chances.

It was a pitched battle, and no mistake. Midnight arrived, and still they played on—Beardie excited, anxious, and faltering; the Devil calm, collected, and calculating. Already Beardie was Satan's debtor to the tune of three games. There was no thought now of refreshment, no signs of a cessation of hostilities, no signs of wavering on either side. Soon after the Tiger won a game through a palpable mistake on the part of his opponent.

Once more the pack was dealt, and desperately, sometimes successfully, generally, however, the reverse, Crawford played his cards, determined to risk everything. His mind was exhausted and stupefied; he made frantic and reckless efforts to retrieve a position which was ere now irretrievably lost; and he felt dimly that, if his case was not to be worsened, he must trump

every possible suit that was tabled, but only to be plunged deeper and deeper into the mire.

One –two o'clock arrived. They went on, wading knee-deep through cards and regardless altogether of time. Outside the tempest was howling with unabated fury. By this time the air of the room was stifling and insufferable; yet they ceased not from play. Silent they sat; nothing was heard save the patter of the cards upon the oaken table within and the angry blast of the storm without. What the Devil experienced in that infernal den we know not; he was as cool and self-possessed as ever. What Beardie felt we can but very feebly conjecture; his savage, tiger-like eyes followed every movement of his antagonist with ravenous torture. No sword hung now by his side—it had fallen upon the floor unheeded. Woe, unutterable woe, sat upon his countenance, and he looked ages older; his cheeks had lost their youthful freshness and were hollow and bloodless; his eyes were bloodshot and glittered maniacally.

Three o'clock came, and he was then four games in arrears. His kestrel-like courage was forsaking him. He had sold his soul to the Prince of Darkness, and the Prince of Darkness was but claiming his own. He had battled with nature, and nature had overcome him. Oh! the inexpressible anguish, the torturing care! Oh! that death would swallow him up, and put an end to all this harrowing ghostlikeness!

He sank into a chair exhausted. Opposite him sat the tempter of men, his face wreathed in a diabolical smile. What unspeakable agony the man was undergoing! His body was cool enough, but his head was on fire—was scorching, and the Devil grinned at the sight. With weary, tottering steps, Crawford rose to his feet and paced the room, striking wildly at the air with his Herculean fingers.

"Thou'rt losing time," the Evil One remarked scoffingly. "Sit down, man, and don't be a coward."

The magic words arrested Beardie, for he possessed all the proud daring and fearless propensities of his great progenitor,

Thor the Thunderer, and did not like to be attainted with cowardice.

A weird-like stillness reigned in the room, broken only by the laboured breathing of the mortal. The birds of darkness, roused by the violence of the storm, fled hither and thither, gibbering loudly as they went. The Tiger sat panting like a wild animal at bay.

"Earl Crawford!" exclaimed the fallen angel, "thou hast desecrated the laws of Heaven, and art worthy of being hurled into the subterranean fires of hell. As an angel, fallen as I am, I was permitted to hear of thy unguarded vow. Remember, who plays with fire must be prepared for burns." Here he smiled vindictively and continued—"The stake, as thou knowest, is thy soul; who fights with the Devil barters neither more nor less. Shouldst thou win, the Prince of Darkness shall not grumble, nay, shall rather be the happier, for every soul that rejects him sends him nearer reunion with the companions of his youth. If thou failest—and it wants but an hour or two to daybreak—Heaven itself cannot help thee; thou shalt pay the penalty of thy rashness—thy soul shall go down, down, down to eternal damnation."

Here he stopped. Beardie had risen, but was silent. No wonder he turned deadly pale; no wonder he stood as if the palsy had smitten him, and his members refused their office. It was more than he could bear. This prospective eternal misery was unmanning him.

Auld Nickie-Ben was not ugly; on the contrary, he might have been called passably good-looking, yet his face assumed a stern fierceness as he said, "Heaven and hell both demand that thy boast shall be requited. A couple of hours more and thy doom is sealed. Command, if thou wilt, the King of kings and all the hosts of heaven to thy aid; or wilt thou yield to me now?"

> There was silence deep, like the silence of sleep,
> Through all that lofty hall—

An instant more, and, like torrent's roar,
A sound through the silence broke;
'Twas stern and loud, 'twas fierce and proud,
'Twas Lindsay's voice that spoke.

"Yield?" he shouted defiantly. "Be your slave? No, never, though everlasting damnation stares me broadcast in the face."

"I am sorry I spoke," returned the other sneeringly. Yet the tones were perceptibly mournful all the same, and they touched Beardie as stern words would not have done. He trembled.

So they set to again, man and angel, as before. The time sped on. Five o'clock came, and Beardie was one step nearer his horrible doom. He worked—he toiled, but in vain—he gnashed his teeth in fury, but no headway could he make. Beads of perspiration burst upon his brow, and rolled down his hollowed cheeks.

At length long streaks of grey light showed themselves athwart the eastern sky, proclaiming the approach of day. Still the whirling, whistling wind came rushing down the vale, and beat louder and more ragingly than ever against the castle. Boreas blew a blustering blast that shook the walls, "an unknown door was open cast," and the Arch-Fiend sang:—

Come, Spirits of Darkness, come!
And take your captive home;
His wild career is run,
We'll claim him as our own.

Ere he had finished, a company of hideous spectres entered the room. Beardie looked on perplexedly, nay, terror-stricken, so weirdly did they walk about the apartment. There might have been thousands of them, yet was there no overcrowding. On the face of each one pale death was stamped, and their sunken eyes glimmered with an unearthly wildness.

"These," said Clootie, "are my worthy disciples; dost thou admire them?"

For answer the Earl shook his head dolefully. His senses

were shattered, lacerated, benumbed, and his tongue clave to the roof of his mouth. When he did regain his voice, he turned shudderingly from so horrid a sight, and cried supplicatingly—

"Leave me! Oh! Heaven have mercy."

"Not yet, not yet," replied Satan.

Crawford staggered to his feet and trembled at the gathering gloom, where only a few hours before haughtiness and lordliness had had so great a part. A thrill of bitter despair shook his powerful frame, and his unsteady, enervated fingers clutched eagerly at his unscabbarded sword which lay at his feet, and he rushed frantically at his antagonist.

"Back, madman, back!" cried the Prince contemptuously. "Woe betide thee; vengeance overwhelm thee! Back, I say; thou'rt doomed to unending torture, to Hell's destructive flame, whose interminable dominions are open for thee, to range through at thy pleasure. For thee there is—

> No hope of heaven, no word, no breath,
> Thy hour is come—to death, to death!"

As the demon uttered the awful judgment, Crawford's hands fell limpless by his sides, and he dropped upon the floor a writhing and woful mass of fallen humanity—chill, alone, forlorn.

The phantom game was over. Daybreak was at hand. Without the hollow winds shrieked wrathfully, and the ground rocked tremblingly. Upon the table the hour-glass had run its course, and the light of the tapers flickered and flickered away, and in the yard, amid the storm, the cock crew thrice. There was a fearful laugh from the Prince of Darkness, a crashing noise as if the heavens had fallen, and the chamber vanished.

. . . . . .

> He is past, he is gone, like a blast of the wind,
> And has left but the fame of his exploits behind.

Lammikin: A Tale of Balwearie.

Over all this hazy realm is spread
A halo of sad memories of the dead;
Of mournful love-tales—of old tragedies,
Filling the heart with pity, and the eyes
With tears at bare remembrance.
—*Voices from the Mountains.*

HEREIN is summed up the true essence of the ancient ballads. Some are arrayed in the most gorgeous attire of chivalrous valour and princely courtesy, and exhibit a touching spirit of a love that is deathless, which goes straight to the heart of a minstrel-loving people; some, on the other hand, are tarnished and deformed by churlishness and treachery. To this latter class belongs the popular ballad of Lammikin. "Narrowing itself into the intense interest of the deepest tragedy," it is one of those which open the floodgates of the affections, and very feelingly indeed it must have appealed to the impulses and understandings of the unlettered people to whom, long ago, it was chanted by our rustic minstrels.

There are many versions of the ballad. Many, too, are the names under which is known the revengeful and blood-thirsty hero of the story—Lammerlinkin, Lammikin, Lamkin, Lankin, Linkin, and Belinkin, all of them apparently corruptions and abbreviations of Lambert Linkin. Motherwell supposes that Lambert may have acquired the epithet "Linkin" from the secrecy and address with which he insinuated himself into the notable strength that plays so important a part in the story. Without doubt he is the cruellest, most heathenish

monster—the grand Gorgon, in short, of Scottish minstrelsy. In the nursery, under the titles of Bold Rankin and Balcanquhal, he holds just such a place as Richard Cœur de Lion or Malek-Rei did in the minds of petulant Saracen children.

The narrative opens in all the nakedness of ancient simplicity, and this artlessness of expression which pervades the ballad stamps it with the seal of an unquestionable antiquity. One kind word and one only can the minstrel ascribe to Lammikin: he was "as guid a mason as ever hewed a stane"—thus far and no further did his goodness extend.

He biggit up Lord Wearie's Castle,
But payment he gat nane.

The ballad does not enlighten us as to Lord Wearie's reasons for refusing to pay the good workman his wages. It could not be that the work had been carelessly and badly done. Perhaps the Baron's estate was a famishing one, and his Lordship on that account was not, though appearances might probably mislead us, rolling in untold wealth. Another version of the story, in fact, hints that this really was the case, and makes Lord Wearie say in reply to the mason's urgent demands—

"I canna pay you, Lammikin,
Unless I sell my lands;

and that," he added in an undertone, "is what I'm not to do." We can imagine Linkin's chagrin and indignation—Courts then-a-days were a nullity—when he was told he would receive nothing for all his expense and labour. Far be it from us to condemn him if he cherished resentment; but, unfortunately, shortness of temper and a far-reaching vengeful nature were the strong points of Lammikin's character.

"Gin ye winna gie me my guerdon, Lord,
Gin ye winna gie me my hire,
This gude castle, sae stately built,
I shall gar rock wi' fire.

"Gin ye winna gie me my wages, Lord,
Ye shall hae cause to rue."
And syne he brewed a black revenge,
And syne he vowed a vow.

In this wrathful frame of mind Lammikin went home—to Doune, where, it seems, his headquarters were. Days passed by. The days lengthened into weeks, and the weeks into months; still the old revengeful flame burned and burned more fiercely, for revenge is sweetened with the keeping. But now the day of reckoning draws nigh. The master-mason has not forgotten that Lord Wearie's castle is doomed to destruction, and by him, too. Ah! no. Time has but whetted his appetite. In the meantime the slumbers of the lady of the mansion have been disturbed by frightful dreams; and one morning, just as the hounds are preparing to follow their master to the greenwood, she hurries down to the court-yard, and, with tears streaming down her pallid cheeks, beseeches the proud Baron to forego the sport for that day.

"Oh, byde at hame, my gude Lord Wearie,
I weird you byde at hame;
Gang nae to this day's hunting,
An leave me a' alane.

Yae nicht, yae nicht I dreamt my bower
O' red, red blude was fu';
Gin ye gang to this black hunting,
Ye shall hae cause to rue."

The nobleman laughed at his wife's fearfulness. "Havers! my winsome dame," he exclaimed; "wha looks to dreams? Awa' wi' thy fears—there's nothing to cause ye alarm." And then he imprinted kisses on the blanched cheek to wile away the starting tears. By this the retainers have got beyond the castle walls, and Lord Wearie, bidding his lady-love a fond adieu, and altogether heedless of her gloomy forebodings, hastens in their wake to the greenwood, while the sorrowful and apprehensive matron, after first causing all the doors and

windows of the fortress to be securely fastened, withdrew to "her painted bower" to dream the dreary hours away. But alas! her precautions were futile; bolted doors and barred windows will little avail when treachery runs loose.

They steekit doors, they steekit yetts,
Close to the cheek and chin;
They steekit them a' but a wee wicket,
And—Lammikin crap in!

Within the castle there was a traitress. Lady Wearie's maid was "a fause limmer," who had laid a plot with Lammikin to betray her mistress. It may not be very far wrong to suppose that, during the erection of the stronghold, there had been incidental scenes of love-making between the nurse and the mason, and that, too, her ladyship had discountenanced them. At any rate the maid is much more than the scoundrel's abettor in the horrible tragedy which marks the fulfilment of his vow. Each wishes the other a friendly good-morning, and straightway proceed to their hellish work. But first Lammikin—for man is the more careful of criminals—makes sure that he is treading on safe ground.

"Where are the lads o' this castle?"
Said the Lammikin.
"They're a' wi' Lord Wearie, hunting,"
Said the fause nourice to him.

"Whaur are the lasses o' this castle?"
Said the Lammikin.
"They're a' oot at the washing,"
Said the fause nourice to him.

"But where's the ladie o' this house?"
Said the Lammikin.
"Oh! she's in her bower, sewing,"
Said the fause nourice to him.

Doors and windows barred and bolted, Linkin is quite at a loss to know how he may reach the lady's boudoir. Where the man fails, however, the woman's wit prevails, and instantly un-

ravels the difficulty. In the cradle at their feet lies the young heir of the castle—

The only bairn Lord Wearie auchts,

and the nurse, with savage delight, whispers in the avenger's ears, "Stab the babe to the heart wi' a silver bodkin." Even Lammikin's flesh creeps at the murderous idea, and he says, "That would be a pity,"—to which the maid replies, "Pity! 'twould be nae pity at a', man." And the fiendish counsel of the woman overcame the man's scruples—if he had any. In a twinkling his vengeful purpose, implacable ever, is changed, yet not softened. More and more inhuman is the bent of the iniquitous villain. By fire he had designed to cancel Lord Wearie's debt—he shall now wreak his vengeance by blood, by the blood of the innocents.

Lammikin nipped the bonnie babe,
While the fause nourice sang;
Lammikin nipped the bonnie babe,
Till high the red blude sprang.

The tragedy deepens. While Linkin rocks the cradle—not tenderly, nor, you may sure, out of kindness or love, and the false nurse lullabies, the shrill agonising cry of the infant pierces the precincts of the lady's bower, and adown the sides and tores, or knobs, of the cradle runs the crimson flood. At the same time the child's tormentors strain their ears to catch the faintest sound. Ere long a door upstairs is opened, and a plaintive voice is heard demanding what is the matter with the boy.

"Oh! still my bairn, nourice,
Oh! still him if ye can."
"He will not still, dear ladie,
For a' his father's lan'."

"Oh! gentle nourice, still my bairn,
Oh! still him wi' the keys."
"He will not still, fair ladie,
Let me do what I please."

"Oh! still my bairn, gude nourice,
Oh! still him wi' the knife."
"He will not still, dear mistress mine,
Gin I'd lay down my life."

"Oh! still my bairn, gude nourice,
Oh! still him wi' the kame."
"He will not still, dear ladie,
Till his daddy comes hame."

"Sweet nourice! loud cries my bairn;
Oh! still him wi' the bell."
"He will not still, dear ladie,
Till ye come down yersell."

Thus imperiously commanded, Lady Wearie was loth to go downstairs, but as the screams of the infant showed no signs of abatement, nothing was left to her but to obey. Soon her footsteps are heard descending—a moment more and she beholds such a scene as makes her heart forget to beat. With one bold dramatic dash the minstrel pictures the dénouement. Rarely anywhere do we find so much subject-matter suggested in a single stanza as in the four lines which follow. Their nudity of language, their powerful suggestiveness and impressiveness, bring out all the horror of the crisis:—

The first step she steppit,
She steppit on a stane;
The next step she steppit,
She met—the Lammikin.

And when she saw the red, red blude,
A loud shriek shrieked she—
"Oh! monster, monster, spare my child,
Wha never skaithed thee!

"Oh! spare, if in your bluidy breast
Abides not heart o' stane;
Oh! spare, and ye shall hae o' gowd
That ye can carry hame!"

"I carena for your gowd," he said;
"I carena for your fee;
I hae been wrangit by your lord,
Black vengeance ye shall dree."

A murderous gleam speaks out from the villain's eyes. Mean, despicably mean is he besides, and he taunts the hapless lady with her utter helplessness. No serfs has she to guard her halls, no trusty spearmen to lay down their lives for her—all have gone to the greenwood, which re-echoes ever and anon with the sounds of hound and horn as the huntsmen follow the fallow-deer. Alone and unprotected thus is she, and Lammikin gloats with diabolical glee over the power with which the circumstances have invested him. To fuel the torture he turns to the nurse and mockingly asks—"Will I kill her, or let her be?" "Kill her!" quoth the heartless vixen—the *gude*, the *kind*, the *gentle*, the *sweet* nourice of the ballad. "Kill her! She was never gude to me. Kill her! and ye'll be laird o' the castle, and I'll be ladie."

The betrayed baroness upbraids her treacherous dependant and hopelessly appeals to her.

"Oh! nourice, wanted ye your meat?
Or wanted ye your fee?
Or wanted ye for anything
A fair ladie could gie?"

"I wanted for nae meat, ladie;
I wanted for nae fee;
But I wanted for a hantle
A fair ladie could gie."

Then Lammikin drew his red, red sword,
And sharp'd it on a stane;
And through and through that fair ladie
The cauld, cauld steel is gane.

All this time the nobleman out in the greenwood is ill at ease. In the midst of the chase he bethinks him of his lady-love's dreams, and, just as coming events cast their

shadows before, a peculiar incident—strange to say—brings back the prophetic warning with tenfold force to his mind. The rings upon his fingers burst ominously in twain—a mishap which the superstitiously inclined believe heralds the near approach of some dreadful calamity, much the same as a woman, when she takes off her rings, on the finger becoming inflamed, imagines that ill-luck will assuredly follow. We do not vouch for the veracity of these assertions any further than that many, even in this enlightened age, entertain such superstitious ideas.

Deep in the mind of Lord Wearie the incident rooted itself. "I wish a' may be weel," he groans aloud, "wi' my ladie at hame," for just then a ghastly vision flits before him and will not go away—a vision in which he seems to see "his sweet bairn's blude sprinkled on a stane." So strong indeed does the conviction become that, there and then, he sounds the horn for returning home. Alas! how sad a home-coming! What a sight met his gaze! Frantically the Baron hurried through his castle halls.

And mair he looked, and dule he saw
On the door at the 'trance—
Spots o' his dear ladie's blude
Shining like a lance.

"There's blude in my nursery,
There's blude in my ha',
There's blude in my ladie's bower,
And that's warst o' a'."

With a true but horrible mixture of concomitant circumstances are portrayed the closing scenes of the terrible tragedy. Outside the castle walls the birds were singing their evening hymns, filling the air with wondrous melody. Ere this, however, Lammikin had decamped, leaving the nurse to explain matters as best she could. How she accounted for the awful crime we are not told—enough it is to know that the punishment was made to suit the crime. On one of the trees, the self-same trees on which the feathered songsters trilled forth their merry lays, a

gallows was erected, and there "the fause limmer" met her doom.

Oh, sweet, sweet sang the birdie
Upon the bough sae hie,
But little cared fause nourice for that,
For it was her gallows-tree.

Another version of the ballad says that she was burnt under the grate. Nor did the arch-monster escape. No mercy had he shown to others, and none was he to receive himself. A fearful retribution awaited him, the ruthless murderer, the killer of the innocent and the helpless—a penalty meet for his outrageous iniquities. With vengeance steeling their hearts and strengthening their arms, Lord Wearie and his men scoured all the surrounding country for the infernal fiend. Near Doune they ran the villain to earth. Tortures unspeakable he was subjected to, as was the custom of the times—

They carried him a' airts o' wind,
And meikle pain had he;
At last, before Lord Wearie's gate,
They hanged him on a tree.

Tales of Lochleven.

Mildly and soft the western breeze
Just kissed the lake, just stirred the trees,
And the pleased lake, like maiden coy,
Trembled but dimpled not for joy.

A PICTURESQUE spot indeed is Lochleven—the pride of Kinross-shire. Lofty hills, from whose snowy summits the streams that feed the lake flow thundering down or tinkle over the rocky crags, hem it round and cast their waxing and waning shadows over its bosom; and when the orb of day has gone down behind the high Ochils and the moon pursues its heavenly course, its glistening waters, studded with

Those emerald isles which calmly sleep
On the blue bosom of the deep,

reflect back the glittering moonbeams. Here, to this vocal vale, the cuckoo pays his earliest visit, and the angler on the lake, as he listens to the thrice-welcome voice, pauses pensively on his rod, while the boatman, never tired of rehearsing the oft-repeated tales of his native loch, points to Kinneswood, the birthplace of Michael Bruce, on the eastern shore of the lake. Poor Michael! At the age of twenty-one he was cut off—an unmercenary bard, whose life penury and relentless disease gnawed away, but whose name is written in bold letters on the scroll of life, and whose genius, too little appreciated during his transient existence, is now, and ever shall be, crowned with fadeless laurels. From his mind emanated that beautiful poem, "Hail, beauteous stranger of the grove!" the finest lyric in mortal language, and that celebrated elegy on Spring which

makes the remembrance of him sacred. Among other pieces he wrote a somewhat lengthy, loco-descriptive poem entitled "Loch-leven," and from it we cull the beautiful episode of Levina, a touching love scene of the most wistful simplicity and tenderness.

> Low by the lake, as yet without a name,
> Fair bosom'd in the bottom of the vale,
> Arose a cottage, green with ancient turf,
> Half-hid in hoary trees, and from the north
> Fenc'd by a wood, but open to the sun.

The inmates of the cottage are a peasant and his lovely daughter; the former an aged man who is nearing the hill-top of life, whose reverend-looking locks and patriarchal grace belie the youthful ruddiness of his cheeks. Careful is he of his daughter, "the apple of his eye," now budding into womanhood, and growing every day more and more like the wife he has lost.

> Belov'd of Heav'n, his fair Levina grew
> In youth and grace the Naiad of the vale,
> Fresh as the flow'r amid the sunny show'rs
> Of May, and blither than the bird of dawn;
> But roses' bloom gave beauty to her cheek,
> Soft tempered with a smile. The light of heav'n
> And innocence illumined her virgin eye,
> Lucid and lovely as the morning star.

Her maidenly modesty, smiling cheerfulness, and sweet con tent set on fire the passions of the shepherds who, while they tended their flocks on the hill-sides and in the dales, sang forth her praises. But Levina knew not love. Her pet diversion was to contemplate nature, to wander through the woods and valleys in quest of birds' nests and herbs and new flowers, which she would carry to the woodmen to learn their names. So the days passed on, till one summer morning—

> O'er valleys gay, o'er hillocks green she walked,
> Sweet as the season; and at times awak'd
> The echoes of the vale, with native notes

Of heart-felt joy, in numbers heavenly sweet—
Sweet as th' hosannahs of a form of light,
A sweet-tongued Seraph in the bow'rs of bliss.

As she paused musingly upon a hill-top, "a quivered hunter" espied her and became spell-bound. In burning language he lays bare the throbbings of his heart. With diffidence the maiden tells him the worthless weed might as well presume to match the mountain-oak. Sore was the combat in the mind and heart of the shepherdess; yet every moment her courage was faltering and her resolution breaking down; and her eyes became false to the words she spoke, while

The deep-enamour'd youth
Stood gazing on her charms, and all his soul
Was lost in love. He grasped her trembling hand
And breathed the softest, the sincerest vows
Of love: "O virgin! fairest of the fair!
My one beloved! were the Scottish throne
To me transmitted through a scepter'd line
Of ancestors—thou, thou should'st be my queen,
And Caledonia's diadems adorn
A fairer head than ever wore a crown!"

The blushing maid consents to be his bride, and many halcyon days they spend together in this paradise on earth. At length the nuptial morn arrived. Nature had donned her gayest attire; streamlets murmured their softest lullabies; the warblers of the grove trilled their mellifluous lays; every living thing was glad, "and there was joy in heaven." Now—

Fair in the bosom of the level lake,
Rose a green island, cover'd with a spring
Of flowers perpetual, goodly to the eye,
And blooming from afar. High in the midst,
Between two fountains, an enchanted tree
Grew ever green, and every month renewed
Its blooms and apples of Hesperian gold.
Here every bride—as ancient poets sing—
Two golden apples gathered from the bough,

To give the bridegroom in the bed of love,
The pledge of nuptial concord and delight
For many a coming year.

Levina sailed for the island with her bridalmaid and pulled the mystic fruit. Yet she was not satisfied: she coveted the enchanted tree, and so uprooted one of the virgin plants that grew beside the parent stem. No sooner had she done this than the island shook, shrieks of woe fell upon their ears, the air grew dark with mystery, and in terror and dismay they got into the boat and hurried from the isle.

And now they gained the middle of the lake,
And saw the approaching land; now, wild with joy,
They rowed, they flew—when, lo! at once diffused,
Sent by the angry demon of the isle,
A whirlwind arose; it lashed the angry lake
To tempest, o'erturned the boat, and sunk
The fair Levina to a watery tomb.

It is a sad story, a story of mingled tenderness and sorrow. For [the distracted youth heave, gentle reader, a sympathetic sigh; and let a teardrop fall, tender maiden, in memory of the hapless virgin. Lomond and Levina!—on earth they lived in joy, knit together by love; in death they were not divided.

All night he wandered by the sounding shore,
Long looking o'er the lake; and saw at times
The dear, the dreary, ghost of her he loved:
Till love and grief subdued his manly prime,
And brought his youth with sorrow to the grave.

The story of Levina naturally leads us to the story of its name. Michael Bruce, in his poem, of course infers that Loch Leven is only a corrupted form of Loch Levina. Popular testimony ascribes its name to its "eleven elevens," by supposing it to be an abbreviation of Locheleven. Eleven estates, the story goes, once touched its shores, and it could be seen from eleven parishes. There are said to be eleven hills round it. It is, or was, eleven miles in circumference, is fed by eleven

Lochleven Castle

streams, studded with eleven islands, peopled by eleven kinds of fish, and frequented by eleven varieties of wild fowl. Etymologists, too, are at variance about it. Some hold that Leven means smooth, while others take the derivation from the meandering nature of the rivers that bear the name; but the most acceptable interpretation is that the word signifies clear, transparency being a characteristic of all the rivers so called, of which there are at least five in Britain. The native derivation may be plausible, but is rather far-fetched, when we weigh the eleven peculiarities of the Kinross-shire Leven with those of the other Levens.

Of the islands which dot the loch, two in particular are fraught with interest to the tourist, the archæologist, and the historian. These are St Serf's Isle and Castle Island. The former carries us back to the Apostolic ages.

> Fronting, where Gairney pours his silent urn
> Into the lake, an island lifts its head.
> Grassy and wild, with ancient ruin heap'd
> Of cells.

That is St Serf's Isle, or, to give it its Celtic appellation, The Inch, thereby showing that once upon a time it was the principal island in the lake. And, indeed, so it is still as regards size, measuring in extent eighty acres or thereabouts, though the halo of interest which surrounded it in the early days of Christianity has, during the roll of ages, diminished and fallen on its sister island which contains the remains of the celebrated castle that was once the prison-house of Scotland's fairest Queen. Ten and a half odd centuries ago Brudus, or Brude, a King of the Picts, founded a priory on the island and dedicated it to Saint Servanus, or Saint Serf, who is supposed to have come on a pilgrimage from the Holy Land, and who was made its first prior.

Long years before the Culdees, "Albyn's earliest priests of God," had settled there, attracted hither by the solitude and security of the spot. Good men were these Culdees, altogether

different from the idolatrous Druidical worshippers who bowed on bended knee to Odin and Thor; different, too, from the monks who owned the papal supremacy and cloistered themselves in some safe retreat, looking all the while with cold indifference on the outside world. For centuries they lived in cells, ministering to the necessities of the people among whom they dwelt, participating in all the trials and vicissitudes of life, entering into society and mingling their religion with such peaceful pursuits as would ensure their sustenance without enriching themselves at the expense of their fellow-men. And when they died, churches sprang up on the spots which their presence had made holy ground. The time came, however—a time of ignorance—when the Picts and the Scots doffed their simple faith for the deceits of Rome, the vices that subdue the soul and the luxuries which kill the heart, when

> Superstition for her cloistered son
> A dwelling reared with many an arch'd vault,
> Where her pale votaries at the midnight hour,
> In many a mournful strain of melancholy,
> Chanted their orisons to the cold moon.
>
> . . . . . .
>
> And when the midnight moon would lave
> Her forehead in the silent wave,
> How solemn to the ear would come
> The holy matin's distant hum,
> While the deep peal's commanding tone
> Should wake, in yonder islet lone,
> A sainted hermit from his cell,
> To drop a bead with every knell.

But times are changed, old manners gone, and little now remains of the sacred edifice; time and tempest have both laid their ruthless and dilapidating hands upon the ruins. Where in dark antiquity the saintly Culdees did penance and offered up their humble fealty; where in later times were heard the plaintive strains, or, haply, the festal-songs of the Anglican

monks as the silent midnight air wafted them shorewards, nothing now breaks the stillness save the cries of the wild-shrieking gull, the lapwing, and the heron, or the night-screaming owl.

Popish legends declare that St Serf had a combat with the Prince of Darkness in one of the caves that pierce the coast of Fife, and expelled him from his dwelling. In the reign of David I., a monarch who founded more monasteries than any other Scottish king, the priory of St Moak, as it was called, was annexed to that of St Andrews. Andro of Wyntoun, the ancient historian, was one of its priors, and in the undisturbed quiet of the place wrote his *Orygynale Kronykil of Scotland.*

Many historic memories are associated with Loch Leven, and of these the most interesting is one which every schoolboy and girl knows, or ought to know, the story of Mary Queen of Scots, "the noblest of the Stuart race." The ancient castle, on what is now called St Mary's Isle, was the place of her captivity after the surrender at Carberry Hill. Here was enacted the midway act of that great drama which had such a terrible consummation. In the grey dawn of a summer's morning in 1567 she was brought over to the lake-island fortress and consigned to the care of Sir William Douglas, who is described in history as an honest man, but stern and unbending. Fully ten months she spent in the castle; and her Stuart spirit, ever proud and hopeful, chafed under the long dreary months of confinement and inaction. Burns ably pictures her lamentations—

> Now blooms the lily by the bank,
> The primrose down the brae;
> The hawthorn's budding in the glen,
> And milk-white is the slae;
> The meanest hind in fair Scotland
> May rove their sweets amang;
> But I, the Queen of a' Scotland,
> Maun lie in prison strang.

Here, a month after she entered the castle, she was forced to

sign her abdication. Glassford Bell graphically describes the incident :—

The scene was changed. It was a lake,
With one small lonely isle,
And there, within the prison walls
Of its baronial pile,
Stern men stood menacing their Queen,
Till she should stoop to sign
The traitorous scroll that snatched the crown
From her ancestral line :—
"My lords ! my lords !" the captive said,
"Were I but once more free,
With ten good knights on yonder shore,
To aid my cause and me,
That parchment would I scatter wide
To every breeze that blows,
And once more reign a Stuart Queen
O'er my remorseless foes !"
A red spot burned upon her cheek—
Streamed her rich tresses down ;
She wrote the words—she stood erect—
A Queen without a crown !

Many attempts were made to rescue her from without, but all failed to break down the vigilance of her keeper. Within the fortress, however, the unfortunate sovereign was more successful. All her arts and charms she brought to bear upon her keeper's brother, George Douglas ; nay, it is even averred that she flattered him to such an extent that he hoped in time to fill the place of Bothwell. Whether this was the case or not it would be hard indeed to say ; anyhow, George Douglas became Mary's ardent slave, and the plot for her release quickly gathered strength. On the evening of the 2nd of May 1568, while the family was at supper, Douglas managed to obtain possession of the keys. Historians relate how Little Douglas, a page-boy, while placing a plate before the keeper, dropped a napkin on the keys, which lay as usual on the table beside that stern gentleman. In lifting the napkin he succeeded in also lifting

the keys along with it, grasping them tightly to prevent them jingling. The rest was the work of a few minutes. Mary and her attendants were ready, and soon they were outside the castle gate, which they locked behind them to delay pursuit. A boat was at hand, and they pushed off, the Queen herself taking an oar. As they neared the shore Douglas dropped the keys into the lake, where they were found, rusty and old, after lying for nearly two hundred and fifty years in their subaqueous bed. The hapless Queen's escape has been pleasingly wedded to poesy by Robert Allan.

Put off, put off, and row with speed,
For now is the time and the hour of need !
To oars, to oars, and trim the bark,
Nor Scotland's Queen be a warder's mark.
Yon light that plays round the castle's moat
Is only the warder's random shot ;
Put off, put off, and row with speed,
For now is the time and the hour of need !

Those ponderous keys shall the kelpies keep,
And lodge in their caverns dark and deep ;
Nor shall Lochleven's towers or hall
Hold thee, our lovely lady, in thrall ;
Or be the haunt of traitors, sold,
While Scotland has hands and hearts so bold ;
Then, steersmen, steersmen, on with speed,
For now is the time and the hour of need !

Hark ! the alarum bell hath rung,
And the warder's voice hath treason sung !
The echoes to the falconet's roar
Chime sweetly to the dashing oar ;
Let tower, and hall, and battlements gleam,
We steer by the light of the taper's beam ;
For Scotland and Mary, on with speed,
Now, now is the time and the hour of need !

We know the rest of the story : let us, therefore, draw a veil over the conclusion of the tragedy in which "*King*

Elizabeth" played so prominent a part. Here we bid the poor Queen adieu!

. . . . . .

Gothic the pile, and high the solid walls,
With warlike ramparts, and the strong defence
Of jutting battlements: an age's toil!
No more its arches echo to the noise
Of joy and festive mirth.
Naked stand the melancholy walls,
Lash'd by the wintry tempests, cold and bleak.

The castle is of great antiquity, and is said to have been built as a Royal residence by Congal, son of Dongart, a Pictish king. It must, therefore, be upwards of fourteen hundred years old. A curious stone pavement is believed to extend from the shore across to the island, which can thus be reached by wading when the loch is low. Alexander III., as well as many of his predecessors, lived in it. The Douglasses, to whom it was granted by Robert III., held it for some generations, after which it reverted again to the Crown.

Now and again, as we have already seen, it was used as a State prison. Besides the captive Queen, another prisoner of Royal blood was confined in it, and spent his last days within its walls. This was the Archbishop of St Andrews—Patrick Graham, by name—the grandson of Robert III., who was arrested at the instigation of the Roman Catholic clergy, the immorality of whose lives he had tried to reform, hustled about from monastery to monastery, and finally cast into the castle, where, in 1478, he succumbed to the ravings of a terrible insanity, brought on by accumulated misfortunes. The Earl of Northumberland, after rebelling against Queen Elizabeth, sought refuge in Scotland, and spent three years—from 1569 to 1572—as a prisoner in Lochleven Castle, at the end of which time he was basely handed over to the English sovereign, who put him to death.

"Woe!" says the prophet; "woe to the land whose king is

a child!" How often, how very often indeed, did Scotland, in days of yore, experience the truth of the adage! How often was she compelled to play that world-old game where death is the awful price, and how often was she almost overwhelmed by her enemies—and all, all because her sovereigns were minors!

The closing years of the Bruce's reign are in our mind's eye. Scotland was free—untrammeled, independent, gloriously free, and its people were looking eagerly forward to that sparkling buoyancy and gladness which is the birthright of every nation that is free. But Bruce died, and though he left behind him a realm basking in the rosy glow and loveliness of infant freedom, he also unfortunately bequeathed to Scotland an infant son. And misfortunes never come singly. The years following the death of Robert and that of his heroic nephew, the good Regent Randolph, were but young when Edward Baliol—son of John Baliol—claimed the crown. Helped by English soldiers, with whom Edward III., surnamed Windsor, was in no wise loth to supply him; supported also by those disinherited barons who had lost their estates during Bruce's struggle for freedom; and above all, aided by the imbecility of the Earl of Mar, into whose feeble hands had fallen the reins of the state;—thus encouraged, Baliol urged on his claims; and for a time it seemed in truth as if the good genius of Scotland had gone with Randolph to the tomb, so manifestly did everything appear to play into the hands of the would-be monarch and his auxiliaries.

A succession of ignominious defeats befel the Scottish arms. At Dupplin Moor "multitudes perished without stroke of weapon," and so terrible was the carnage that it will ever rank as one of the most calamitous and inglorious reverses in the annals of our country. The battle of Halidon Hill was the crowning mishap. Only five strongholds held out for King David. One of these was the Castle of Lochleven, which was gallantly defended by Sir Alan de Vipont, assisted by James Lambie, a citizen of St Andrews.

Early in the year 1334 Baliol laid siege to the castle. Per-

ceiving, however, that it would be too great a tax upon his time and strength to capture it, he appointed one of his commanders, Sir John de Strivelin, or Stirling, to continue the blockade. Serving in the army of the besiegers there were—be it to our lasting shame!—several Fife gentlemen of note, amongst others Michael and David de Wemyss, Michael de Arnott, and Richard de Melville. The insular position of the fortress made the siege a matter of the greatest difficulty, and the Fifan barons to whom the place was quite familiar, fortified themselves in the churchyard of St Serf, just over against the castle, from which vantage-ground all imaginable attempts were made to reduce it; but in vain, until at last it became evident that nothing but downright strategy would prevail. All other devices having failed, they resolved to drown the stronghold and its stubborn defenders by damming up the outlet of the lake with trees and stones and turf. To cause the water to rise more rapidly they turned the courses of several rivers and brooks in the country round about so as to make them flow into the loch.

Now, happily for Vipont and his brave comrades, it chanced to be the season of Lent, and Sir John Stirling—devout man that he was!—went, for devotion's sake, with a number of his officers to visit the shrine of St Margaret in the holy city of Dunfermline. Yet it would have fared ill with the beleaguered garrison had not news of this manœuvre been carried immediately to Sir Alan, who quickly made himself master of the situation. The camp of the besiegers, who imagined themselves secure from molestation, was wrapped in heavy sleep. At midnight a boat was launched. Taking with him a few of his soldiers, he rowed with all possible caution to the embouchure of the river, and succeeded in perforating in several places the dyke which stemmed its waters. This accomplished, the little party silently returned to the castle.

Then the pent-up water, having once found a way of escape, widened the orifices that had been made. The great barrier at last creaked—it gave way, and the flood rushed from its one-

time prison like an angry mountain lion. It tumbled and roared—Benarty, in trembling wrath, echoed back the sound. It overflowed the plains. It swept away everything that threatened to impede its progress. It drowned the bastions and tents of the besiegers, and carried the bewildered soldiers, just awaking from sleep, and their affrighted horses away towards the sea. Then the garrison issued forth from the castle to complete the work of destruction, and, falling upon those who had survived the flood, slew a great many of them, the rest seeking safety in flight. Elated with success, and enriched with the spoils and provisions which became his portion, the victorious general prepared his fortress for the lengthened siege which, he felt sure, would inevitably follow. Sir John Stirling, when he heard of the discomfiture of his host, blazed up into the most ungovernable fury, and returned to the blockade, vowing never to depart from thence till he had taken the citadel and put to the sword all that were within its walls.

Yet, after staying there a long time and seeing that it was practically impossible to win the fortress, he deemed it advisable to abandon the undertaking. Thus was the glory of the Kingdom recovered by the intrepidity and fortitude of Sir Alan de Vipont and his brave companions.

To look at the quiet waters of Lochleven, with its castled and monastic ruins crumbling to dust amid their beautiful trees, with nothing to disturb the solitude but the twitters or screams of the birds about them, or the splash and swish of the fisherman on its shadowed waters, few would imagine that it had played such an important part in the roll of ages.

The Legend of Sauchope.

IT was the 20th of March 1708. Night had closed in, and a raw, cold, bleak night it was indeed. Against the iron-bound coast of the East Neuk the raging billows of the North Sea were lashing themselves, and ebbing away again with a noise like distant thunder; and along the streets of the Flemish-looking town of Crail, its wings laden with an easterly haar which penetrated one through and through like the edge of a sword, swept a bitter biting blast, making the street grass which grew unheeded save by our equine friends and their bovine relations, wave to and fro in the misty starlight.

The old church-bell had just tolled the hour of ten, and, as the dolorous clang of the tremulous instrument died away, the good folks of the ancient burgh barred their doors and windows, preparatory to making themselves snug and secure for the night. The last reveller had departed from the Thane o' Fife, as the inn or chief hostel in the town was called, and at the door gazing after the retreating figure stood the landlord, old Master Spiggot, muttering with many a sad and solemn shake of his hoary head, "There *was* a time!" Yes, there was a time, but that was before the much-hated union of the two countries depauperated the coast towns of Fife of much of their foreign commerce.

Out of his reverie Master Spiggot was awakened by the sudden appearance of a horseman, whose approach had been muffled by the length and softness of the grass which covered the street. Cheerily greeting the landlord the traveller lightly dismounted, and, stooping, entered the low-arched door of the

inn, with its old monastic legend and its well-known signboard, adorned with the Thane of Fife, armed *cap-a-pie*, careering at full gallop on a gaily caparisoned charger from the ireful rage of Macbeth.

Boniface Spiggot measured the stranger with great diligence as he strode into the bar, his gilt spurs clanking accompaniment to his stern soldier-like tread. All in all, he was rather prepossessing, well-made, of middle age, with dark, piercing eyes, and short moustache which breathed of foreign warfare. Everything bespoke a free and gentlemanly bearing. Everything about him was so picturesque and handsome that Master Spiggot who had seen many wonderful things in his days, looked on in perfect wonder and admiration. He was arrayed in a brightly coloured and profusely furred roquelaur-cloak, over which flowed the essenced love-locks of his massive peruke, so common among the courtiers of that time. A broad-leafed beaver hat with a large, white plume rested upon his head. Such was his outward appearance. Divesting himself of his richly-embroidered roquelaur there was displayed a slashed doublet of white velvet, edged all the way with broad bars of exquisite lace, and drawn in at the waist by a handsome belt, fastened by a monster gold buckle.

The sight bedazzled the landlord's eyes. Verily, he thought, here is a Prince, and hastened to apologise for the meanness of his entertainment. At the same time he set before his guest his poor viands—to wit, a Crail capon or broiled haddock, done just as only Boniface himself knew how to do them, and a stoup of the best wine. His love of pelf—maybe, however, it was merely his curiosity—had been pricked, and he remarked—"Your honour canna think o' ridin' on the nicht." The stranger told him that it was impossible for him to tarry; he must set out again as soon as he had supped and drunk. At this Master Spiggot, with genuine Fifish hospitality, proceeded to warn him of the dangers he might encounter should he lose his way.

"Never fear!" said the traveller laughing. "I know every inch of the road, and am therefore quite able to avoid the pitfalls and the rocks."

Like his contemporaries, the publican of the Thane was inquisitive—dreadfully so; and, like many another person, deemed himself omniscient so far as a knowledge of the persons and places of the East Neuk was concerned. But though he scrutinised the stranger's visage with great deliberation, he could not for the life of him recal any precognition of it, and had for once to acknowledge himself fairly beaten, simply saying, "Your Lordship kens the country hereabouts, then?"

"Yes, mine host!" replied the cavalier, in a tone that carried conviction with it and was meant to be decisive. Then, after reflecting a moment, he asked, "Are there any visitors with thee just now, gudeman?"

"Alack-a-day! sir, our guests are unco few and far between noo. But there's one cam' just at the gloamin'—a gey foreign-looking-like chap who has been asking the way to Balcomie Castle. A soldier I would tak' him to be, frae the way he cocks his beaver."

"Balcomie—did you say? Commend me to him, and bid him come and sup with me."

"What name did you say, kind sir?" asked Spiggot.

"Get out, thou inquisitive scoundrel," replied the knight most good-naturedly. "I gave thee no name; but say to this foreigner that the Major of the Earl of Orkney's Dragoons solicits his companionship in a stoup of Bordeaux wine."

Boniface hastened to obey his guest's commands, the result of which was that the latter soon found himself in the presence of the Continental cavalier who greeted his visitor with characteristic politeness. An exceedingly tall dark man he was with a Grecian nose, over which his almost jet-black eyebrows formed one continuous line. He was faultlessly attired in a green velvet suit, so lavishly adorned with lace that the silk was all but invisible.

Introductions over, the two fell a-talking. The conversation hinged on the wars which they had passed through. It turned out that both had fought in the same campaigns—particularly in that of Ramillies in 1706, when the Scottish soldier served in the Grey Dragoons and the foreign knight under the "old tyrannical dog," Baron Van Vandenberg, on the side of the allies, for he was a French Protestant refugee. One incident in the battle neither of the men, thus strangely met, could forget, and the visitor asked the Scotsman to give his version of the affair, whereof the following is an epitome :—

It was at the attack on Pont-a-Vendin. Two young Frenchmen, serving like yourself in Vandenberg's regiment, had connived at the escape of an illustrious French prisoner whom some averred was none other than Marshal Villeroi himself. Of course, the affair caused great excitement in the camp, and the hard-hearted, inhuman Dutchman insisted that the culprits should be unconditionally handed over to him for punishment. Marlborough, who was Commander-in-Chief of the allied forces, whether from want of thought or in haste, granted the Hollander's request. As the Duke's aide-de-camp, the written order was conveyed by me, so I witnessed the whole ghastly scene—a scene which I never recal without sadness and horror.

Vandenberg received the despatch as a lion might his prey—with a growl of savage delight. I shall never forget his face—it haunts me even yet. He would have bowed, but the shortness of his neck and the rotundity of his body would not permit of such a condescension. I could have laughed outright at the oddity of his aspect, but with becoming grace delivered my message, then retired, ostensibly to humbly await any reply, but in reality to hide the smiles that would, in spite of me, play bo-peep with one another across my face.

His eyes gleamed with diabolical wrath and exultation. Seizing his speaking trumpet he shouted—"Ruyters—halt! Form open column—trot! Forward the flanks—form circle—sling musketoons! Trumpeters—to the centre and dismount!"

The manœuvres were executed so suddenly that, before I was aware of it, I found myself surrounded by the Ruyters, and thus became, perforce, a spectator of the awful drama. I saw a specimen of Dutch discipline and barbarity. One of the young volunteers was stripped to the skin, and the savage Hollander, after surveying him for a moment with mingled rage and triumph thundered out the single word—"Flog!"

Never shall I forget the scene. A brawny trumpeter stept forth. Down came the many-knotted scourge again and again, leaving at each fell swoop nine deep furrows as if a red-hot plough had gone over the skin. An awful stillness reigned, broken only by the muffled groans of the victim, the whiz of the horrible whip as it lashed the air in its descent, and the spluttering of the torches, for it was night and the snow was falling fast.

"Flog!" Another powerful trumpeter administered his twenty-five strokes.

"Flog! Flog! Flog!" More trumpeters wielded the weapon; the drums rat-a-tapped the time, and the blows numbered now not dozens, but hundreds. At last there was a convulsive shudder, the jaws relaxed, the head fell—the brave young Frenchman was dead.

Orders were at once given to prepare the other prisoner for the slaughter. But I had seen enough, and was not inclined to stand any more; so, disgusted and enraged, I approached the heathenish monster and said—"Mynheer Baron Van Vandenberg, here are one hundred guineas—wilt thou hand over to me this prisoner?"

The Dutchman's greed was well-nigh as matchless as his brutality. "Ach!" he cried, "dat's ver small—zay two hunder ponds."

I was determined to have the prisoner, however, and therefore told him that I would refer the matter to the Commander-in-Chief, whereupon he grinned furiously and said, "Gib me de bills, ant de schleman iz yours."

Thus the young soldier's life was saved. The Ruyters marched away. Sadly and tenderly we drew the half-frozen clothing over the stiffened form of the murdered brother, and, tying it across the saddle of my horse, set out for the nearest town.

At this point the foreign cavalier who had refrained at first from giving his companion his name, and had listened to the story with but little interruption, started to his feet. Grasping the Scotsman by the hand, he exclaimed, "For Armentières, near Lille! Oh, Monsieur, I am that Frenchman," and could say no more, but kissed his saviour's hand again and again.

"You!" cried the Major in blank amazement. "What in all the world are you doing here in this out-of-the-way place, and at such a perilous time for a foreigner?"

"It's the same old tale, monsieur—love, ambition, and envy. Doubtless you have heard of M. Henri Lemercier?"

"What!" said his companion, "the great swordsman and fencer, whom all Europe know? Give me your hand again. There is but one man whom knights of the rapier place alongside of you, sir, and that is Sir William Hope."

"Here is my secret, monsieur. I love Mademoiselle Athalie, whom, no doubt, you have heard of. Mon dieu! she has indeed set me a task. Nothing will satisfy her but I must cross swords with the Scottish chevalier who, Athalie thinks, usurps my reputation. In token of my conquest I must take back this handkerchief stained with his blood. When I have accomplished this, her hand becomes mine."

"Monsieur Lemercier," said the Scotchman impressively, "permit me as one who hath knowledge of Sir William Hope to warn thee. He has a sure hand and a steady eye, and thou mayst have to bite the ground."

The Frenchman, however, was obdurate, and his friend volunteered to be the bearer of his challenge to the Laird of Balcomie. When he departed he bade Monsieur Lemercier be

at the Standing-Stone of Sauchope on the morrow as the sun was rising out of the German Ocean.

Next morning Lemercier was up betimes. Attiring himself with greater scrupulousness than usual, and following the directions given him by the landlord of the Thane, he proceeded towards the Sauchope Stone—a tall, rough, ungainly obelisk of ages long ago, and with a history all its own. As he approached the time-worn relic he perceived a gentleman standing near it, and though the latter's back was towards him, recognised his friend of the preceding night.

"Bon jour, monsieur," he cried when he came within speaking distance. "I was beginning to fear that Sir William was not going to accept my challenge."

"Oh, yes," answered the other, as he mounted his horse. "I am Sir William Hope of Balcomie, and await your pleasure."

Words fail to picture the Frenchman's astonishment and dismay. He lamented his ill-luck, and the evil fate that had driven him to a strange land. He would have retired from the contest without striking a blow, but Balcomie told him to remember his promise to Athalie, and to think of her only. And with this Lemercier had to be satisfied.

So the fight commenced. Greek met Greek. Both combatants were the envy of their contemporaries. Lemercier was the primordial swordsman in France, where every knight practised the art of fencing and excelled in it; while Sir William Hope's prowess as a handler of the rapier and falchion and quarterstaff was known over all the world.

Cautiously they approached each other as if unwilling to strike. By-and-by, however, their passions became whetted with rivalry, and the stipulation they had made at the commencement of the fray, to sheathe their swords whenever blood was drawn, was soon lost sight of in a fierce desire to conquer. The swords clashed furiously together, and their sheen shone like the morning sun upon the waters near by. Now and again the combatants ceased their exciting play to take breath,

and in the intervals regarded each other with mortal hatred which death alone could quench.

> Then each at once his falchion drew,
> Each on the ground his scabbard threw,
> Each looked to sun and stream and plain,
> As what they ne'er might see again.

Once more they engaged—warily and sternly. The champing and foaming of the steeds, the straining of the stirrup-straps, the laboured breathing of the mortals as they lunged and parried each deadly thrust, their tattered coats and scarred faces and hands—all showed how dreadful was the combat. At last Lemercier, thoroughly exhausted, failed to parry a lunge which pierced him under the fifth rib, so that he fell gasping to the ground.

In an instant Sir William was on his knees beside his prostrate rival, to render him what comfort and assistance he could. Lemercier was unfortunately beyond mortal aid. He could only draw from his finger his exacting sweetheart's hair-ring with her rich brown tresses clasped in its initialed shield, and, breathing "Athalie," he died.

Such is the legend of Sauchope. The combat Sir William Hope never forgot. To his dying day he cursed the evil fate that had made him the slayer of the gallant Lemercier. The latter was honourably interred in the ancient kirk, and a marble tablet placed over the spot but feebly indicated the Scotsman's affliction. We naturally wonder what became of Mademoiselle Athalie. The victorious knight, in obedience to the Frenchman's dying behest, carried the ring to her; but ere that happened she had ceased to mourn for her dead lover, and had wedded one of her innumerable admirers. Such is the world's love, and here our story ends.

Some Storied Stones.

EVERY country has its landmarks. Very often these are ancient castles or keeps, sometimes only rugged and clumsy stones which the defacing fingers of time and tempest have shorn of all ornaments or inscriptions they may once have borne. Yet round "these dumb historians," though to the commonalty they are nothing else than mere stones which, some time or other, will be broken for man's usury, cluster legends of bygone ages and stories of old-forgotten things and battles long ago. Ask the people who live at the door of these monuments of history, often—alas! too often—they can tell you nothing at all about them. Daily proximity and daily perception enervate all interest in what should rather be fascinating and touching relics.

Foreigners, however, are different. They seem never tired of studying these insignificant stones. Nay, they would even depauperate us of them if that were possible. Witness, for instance, the Lia Fail or the Black Stone of Dunstaffnage. Jacob laid his wearied head on it on the plain of Luz. By stages it was carried to Scone. And Edward I. of England, when he ravaged Scotland six hundred years ago, broke either the eighth or tenth commandment over the top of it—perhaps both—and took it away with him. Nowadays one may see it in Westminster Abbey, enclosed in the framework of the Coronation Chair. And Scotsmen keep their eyes on that famous stone, for there is a prediction that,

> Unless old prophecies and words are vain,
> Where'er this stone is found the Scots shall reign.

A good story is told of a Scottish pilgrim who, some years ago, was seeing the sights of the great metropolis. The precious heir-loom of the Scota-Gathelic race was pointed out to him. For a while he stood regarding the famous relic in deep meditation, then turned to an Englishman who was standing near, and abruptly exclaimed—"Ye've nae richt tae that stane!"

"What do you mean, sir?" demanded the astonished Southron.

"Jist what I say," thundered forth the angry Scot; "ye've nae richt tae that stane!"

"My dear sir, I cannot understand you," replied the English man, still more astonished.

"Aweel, sir, gin ye dinna ken, I'll tell ye. Ane o' your theevish kings, Neddy Something, tuik that stane awa' frae Scone, an' ye've never haen sae muckle honesty as return't," saying which the irate Scot turned on his heel and walked off, leaving the bewildered Londoner to solve the problem to the best of his ability.

It is quite probable that the Fateful Stone, on its southward journey in 1296, passed through the Kingdom, in which there are many remarkable and interesting "footprints on the sands of time." Midway between Leven and Largo may be seen the Standing Stones of Lundin.

There are three of them, set triangularly. There appears, however, to have been at one time a fourth, coequal in magnitude with the others. They call to mind Druidical times, and must consequently be at least two thousand years old. Round these rude obelisks the Picts of Ross, as Fife was wont to be called, used to congregate, not to cultivate their religion though the Druids, their priests, attended The Druids, the ancient writers tell us—and them we have no choice but to believe—had no temples; they worshipped in groves of oak, and in almost every case where these ungainly circles of uncut stones appear "the spreading and majestic oak tree" would never thrive. No! this was the judgment-hall, so to speak—the mercy-seat, if you will, though mercy was doled out in meagre quantities—the judiciary circle of the Druids who united to their priestly office also those of educators and lawgivers. They were the civil and criminal judges, ruling the laity by superstitious awe and extreme penalties of excommunication and outlawry.

There was the altar—the tallest stone, facing the south. Some heinous crime has been committed, and now the criminal is about to undergo his trial. It is short, dreadfully short, almost farcical. But the execution is no farce: the gory stream bemoistens the stony altar, and the gods rub their hands with glee and laugh.

But hearken! Sounds of battle float upon the air, and, waxing more and more wrathful as the conflict deepens, strike upon the ears of the eager listeners in the groves. Presently the shibboleths of the natives rise and fall in triumphant clamour as they hurry their captives on towards the judgment-seat. A monstrous sacrifice assuredly is this! And while the altar overflows with copious libations and the air reeks with the warm blood of the victims, the bards strike their rude harps, and the painted men of the woods mingle their rough and savage voices in wild war-songs.

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Another historic relic, similarly renowned, is the Standing Stone of Sauchope, in the vicinity of the East Neuk. It was the scene of a famous duel which was fought in the beginning of the eighteenth century. The owner of Balcomie, a mansion-house in the neighbourhood, was Sir William Hope, an accomplished swordsman, whose fame as a fencer had spread over the whole of Europe. An envious foreigner, anxious to denude the Scotsman of his laurels, appeared one day at Balcomie and challenged Sir William to combat. The duel took place on horseback, and the jealous cavalier soon found to his cost that in the Knight of Fifeness he had met his match, for he fell in the fray.

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Not far from Sauchope Stone are the crumbs of another interesting memento of antiquity. In the long-ago ages the Norsemen played terrible havoc with the coast of Fife. Men of gigantic stature were these northern warriors, possessing incredible herculean strength, and performing wonders in a single night which ordinary mortals could only accomplish in weeks and months. So our forefathers esteemed them. In 874 A.D. Constantine II., the Scottish King, defeated the marauders and forced them into a corner at the East Neuk. But much can be done at "the corner." Here they securely entrenched themselves by building a wall of drystones right across the angle from shore to shore. The fabric was afterwards known as the Danes' Dyke. Tradition says it was raised in one night. And the Round Tower of Abernethy which the Picts erected, it also asserts, occupied a similar space of time. What marvellous strength, what supernatural vigour, what rock-moving brawny arms they must have possessed! They ought to be living now, or some of us should have been living then for our edification.

At the southern extremity of the Dyke is the Longman's Grave, where some Danish giant awaits the blast of the trumpet. Mayhap he is fighting his battles over again, or hunting on the plains of Valhalla all day long, or quaffing in its halls endless

draughts of mead, his well-earned meed, from the skulls of his fallen foes.

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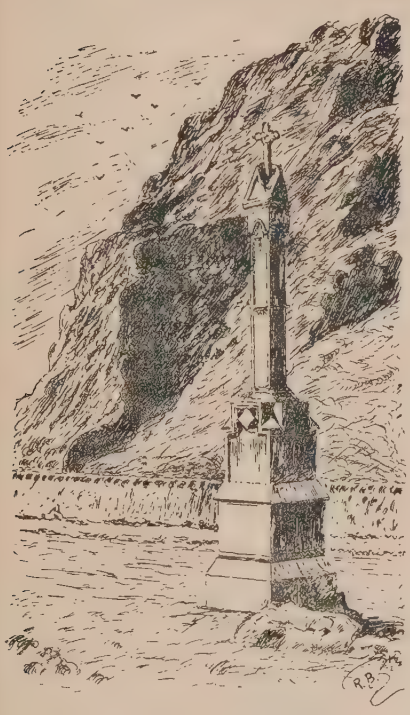
Visitors to the good old town of Kinghorn, as it is termed in the early charters, must have noticed on the way to Burntisland a lofty monument surmounted by a Celtic cross. One dark night long ago—the 16th of March 1285—a solitary horseman was careering homewards along the cliffs, when his steed went over the rocks. Thomas of Ercildoun had predicted on that day such a storm would burst over Scotland as mortals had never before witnessed. And it was. Bright and beautiful had been the morning, and at eventide the courtiers were twitting the Rhymer as a false prophet.



THE ALEXANDER III. MEMORIAL.

"A storm shall roar this very hour
From Ross's hills to Solway sea."
"Ye lied, ye lied, ye warlock hoar,
For the sun shines sweet on fauld and lea."

He put his hand on the Erlie's head,
And showed him a rock beside the sea,
Where a king lay stiff beneath his steed,
And steeldight nobles wiped their e'e.

That one false step, a horse's, too, almost disfigured Scotland. Much ill it brought to this country—hundreds of years of intrigues, and warfare, and calamity. Huge mountains it created—mountains of murdered patriots and rivers of blood, and lakes of widows' and orphans' tears. Surely it was from the bottom of his heart that the ancient minstrel wrote—

> When Alysander, owre kyng, was dede,
> Our gold was changèd into lede !

A good and brave prince was Alexander III. He had clipped the wings of the Norse ravens, had made a name for Scotland, and proved himself a strict and careful administrator of justice. Unhappily for the nation, however, he was cut off in the midst of his days, and the long period of national misfortune which succeeded his death stamped the impression of his loss indelibly on Scottish hearts. This, at least, is undoubtedly the testimony of the splendid pillar which commemorates the sex-centenary of his death. The King's Rock or Crag is still pointed out, though six hundred years have rolled by. But do not be surprised if you hear it called the Black Stone ; from the inky direfulness of the event connected with it, it richly merits such an appropriate appellation.

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In the north-west of the county, among the Ochil Hills, stands the freestone pedestal of Macduff's Cross, which was to the great family of the Duffs what Kedesh-Naphtali was to the children of Israel—an asylum or place of refuge. In earliest times the shedding of blood was requited only by the death of the slayer, the result being the commencement of long-raging family feuds. Premeditated murder met with no compassion—death was the inevitable penalty, the murderer being hounded hither and thither until the avenger of blood, generally the next of kin, smote him to the ground, not out of enmity, but because the duty of avenging blood devolved upon the relatives of the slain person. For unintentional killing the Mosaic Law estab-

lished in Canaan cities of refuge to which the homicide might fly, and the loyal Macduff, little else than a prince, for Fife, when Malcolm Caenmohr had got his own back again, was constituted a principality in all but name, created the Cross into a sanctuary, not to abolish the avenging of manslaughter, but to mitigate the evils which attended it.

The Cross, of course, had an inscription—to wit, a monkish, macaronic jumbling of languages, all distorted into antiquated Latin. Here it is :—

Ara, urget lex quos, lare egentes atria lis, quos,
Hoc qui laboras, haec fit tibi pactio portus ;
Mille reum drachmas mulctam de largior agris,
Spes tantum pacis cum nex fit a nepote natis.
Propter Macgridum et hoc oblatum accipe semel
Haeredum, super lymphato lapide labem.

And this, being very liberally interpreted, means :—

For those by law compelled to flee, by strife pursued,
And houseless made, an altar here is raised—
A sanctuary where he who blood has shed, may find
A refuge from th' avenging next of kin.
One thousand drachms must pay for his remission,
Or else his kine and lands shall be distrained :

But only such as are within the ninth degree
Of kinship (to Macduff) may hope for peace.
For St Magridin's sake and by this offering,
His crime's atoned for by washing at this stone.

Years, generations, centuries passed by. The Reformation era came round, and John Knox who feared neither prelate nor queen, came too, and began to vent his terrific rage against Romanism. He but spoke, and then

> Great gangs of bodies, thick and rife,
> Gaed bickerin' through the towns of Fife,
> And wi' John Calvin in their heads,
> And hammers i' their hands, and spades,
> Enrag'd at idols, mass, and beads,

proceeded to demolish everything that was popish or had the semblance of popishness about them. St Margaret, King Malcolm's gentle queen, was a devoted Papist, and the Macduff sanctuary was therefore symbolic of her religion. Erected in the morning of Saxon monkism, ere the afternoon had died away it was destroyed, and the pedestal is all that remains to show us where it stood.

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> King Malcolm has brocht a bonnie ship,
> And seamen o' high degree ;
> And his fair young Queen has stepped on board
> To cross the narrow sea.

So says the old ballad. The first time that that fair young Queen—Saxon Margaret—crossed that narrow sea, the Firth of Forth, was when she fled with her brother and sister from William the Conqueror. Fate drove their vessel up the Forth. They found refuge in a sheltered haven near Queensferry which since then has been called St Margaret's Hope. Then the Royal party footed their way to Dunfermline in the woods, where the Scottish monarch lived. And as the fugitives journeyed thither a huge boulder by the roadside seemed to invite them to linger awhile. There the wearied Princess sat and rested, and loving, patriotic hearts have revered her saintly memory by naming it St Margaret's Stone. This stone is believed to possess more ancient historical

associations, and to have formed part of a Druidical circle. Apropos of such memorials of the pagan antepast we notice incidentally the Standing Stones of Orwell.

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Quite a different relic altogether is the Bull Stone, which is to found on Leslie Green, near the gateway of the old place of sepulture. A fighting place Leslie seems to have been in the olden times. It was the Fifan Olympia. On the green were held bull fights which rivalled all the horrors of the arena of "tawny Spain." Here the poor animals, after being tethered to the stone to which they bequeathed their name, were fought and slain amid the barbaric acclamations of the populace—"butchered to make a *Leslian* holiday." Here was the Barrace Yett, or Gate of Combats, where the cock fights took place. Then followed games of strength and skill—wrestling, tossing the caber, putting the stone, and shinty—the proceedings, as a rule, terminating in a wholesale fisting-match among the matadors and gladiators, when all were invited, free of charge, and few stayed away; for, you know, "when the wine is in, the wit is out."

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Come once again to the angle-town of Fife—to Crail. At the corner of the Kirk Lane lies a large weather-worn boulder known as the Blue Stane o' Crail. One day in the reign of David I., the legend runs, while the Old Kirk was being erected, an old-fashioned little mannikin arrived upon the scene and proffered his services. These were accepted, and the newcomer worked laboriously, doing quite as much as, if not more than, any of the other workmen. But after his arrival a strange thing happened, not unlike the mysterious web of Penelope which was woven by day and unravelled by night. Each morning all the previous day's work was found to be undone. The builders were at their wits' end—a holy father was called—the matter was inquired into—and the transgression traced to the little mannikin who turned out to be no other than Satan

himself. He was immediately expelled, and startled the beholders by flying away with a mighty howl.

Landing on the Isle of May, just opposite Crail, Auld Hornie tore off a huge piece of rock and hurled it across the intervening waters, with the intention of demolishing the sacred edifice. The devil seems to have had a great partiality for such escapades. Strange, isn't it, that he so often forgot that those who live in glass houses should not throw stones? In this case, however, the shot was a ricochet which rolled towards but did not reach its mark. There it stands, a terror, as it were, to Sabbatarians, with a deep hollow in it—the mark of the devil's thumb.

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The Louping-on or Toad Stone! These, by the way, are not synonymous terms, though toads are louping creatures. Herein, however, lies the connection. At the entrances to mansion-houses miniature stairs were wont to be built for the purpose of assisting ladies to mount on horseback. The flat broad stone forming the coping was therefore called "the louping-on stone."

Sir Robert Sibbald chronicles the incident which happened at Dunbog in his own days. Three gentlemen—two doctors and a divine—had gone out for a walk one day, and, on their return, stopped at the ladies' stair, when a croaking noise was heard coming from under the topstone. They examined it thoroughly, but no fissure or chink could be found—it was all so very closely built. The servants were called to loosen and turn it off, when—lo! there were displayed to the gaze of the wondering philosophers three toads, one of them very large, the others ordinarily sized, and all as full of life as toads could be, though they had been encoffined for more than a dozen years.

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Another remarkable monument was the Rocking Stone of Balvaird in the parish of Strathmiglo. A slight touch of the hand made it rock to and fro, but to a great force it was quite

immobile. Curious, the perversity of things! Some of Cromwell's soldiers laid destructive fingers on it during their sojourn in the Kingdom, and the mystery was then unfolded. There were two stones. In the surface of the under boulder was a cavity into which fitted, like a pivot, "an extuberant yolk" or excrescence which, were we to believe all we hear, had grown during the lapse of ages in the middle of the under surface of the upper stone.

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Not half of the storied stones of the Kingdom have been touched upon. There are a host of others, all conjuring up some legend of the past, some story of a gloomy and mysterious pagan age, some reminiscence of sanguinary conflicts in which our forefathers fought like demigods, or betraying some secret which helps to illuminate the enigmas of a wonderful Nature.

The Bonnie Earle o' Moray.

MORAY! The name raises up before our mind's eye a host of interesting memories of the brightest and purest figures in Scottish chivalry. Yet these very remembrances are saddened, though not dimmed, when we recal how often the Nemesis of fate has sought a Moray for its victim.

There was the "Fierce Randolph," nephew of the Bruce, a mighty man of war, raging and uncontrollable as a mountain torrent, but brave and fearless as a lion, a soldier whose worth and exploits are warped into the woof of Scotland's history, and appear transcendently brighter and tenfold more interesting to the people of the Kingdom from the fact that, five hundred and seventy years ago, he was Baron of Aberdour. No place have we here to recount his heroic deeds. Ross says that when he died—poisoned, it is believed, by an Anglican monk—he was universally lamented as an incorruptible Regent, a brave soldier, a wise statesman, and a noble-hearted man. His bones rest beside those of his patriot uncle in Dunfermline—truly a fitting place for such honoured dust!

Randolph's two sons both fell in battle and found soldiers' graves. And who has not heard or read of his daughter? Black Agnes she was, that famous heroine who, in the absence of her lord, the Earl of March, gallantly and successfully defended Dunbar Castle against the attacks of the English under the Earl of Salisbury, and showed her unbounded contempt for them by bidding her maids wipe the dust off the

walls with a towel when the great stones from the Southron catapults alighted thereon.

> She kept a stir in tower and trench,
> That brawling, boisterous Scottish wench ;
> Came I early, came I late,
> I found Agnes at the gate.

The Wizard of the North, too, makes mention of the Morays in the "Lady of the Lake," when Malise, as if to emphasise the seer's prophetic warning, says to Roderick Dhu—

> At Doune o'er many a glancing blade
> Two baron's banners well displayed
> I saw, and hurrying to the war
> The gallant Moray's silver star.

Then there was James Stuart, Earl of Moray, whose virtues and talents and fame are written on brass, as well they should be, and whom we know, and whom future generations shall know and affectionately remember by the honoured name of the Good Regent, as he certainly was—a great and good man, *sans peur et sans reproche.* Everybody knows how he was prematurely laid low by an assassin's bullet in 1570 as he marched through the streets of Linlithgow.

Sacred and touching also is the memory of the "Bonnie Earle," the Regent's son-in-law, whose nonpareil comeliness and matchless accomplishments brought down upon his head a nest of hornets whom nothing would satisfy but the blood of the innocent young Knight.

Sir James Balfour, in his "Annales of Scotland," relates the story of the Earl's murder, but even there it is told imperfectly. He says :—

"The 7 of Februarij this zeire, 1592, the Earle of Murray was cruelly murthered by the Earle of Huntly, at his house in Dunibrissell, in Fyffeshyre, and with him Dumbar, Shriffe of Murray ; it [was] given out, and publickly talked, that the Earle of Huntly was only the instrument of perpetratting this

facte [deed], to satisffie the Kinges jelosie of Murray, quhom the Queine, more rashlie than wyslie, some dayes before had commendit in the Kinges heiringe, with too many epithetts of a proper and gallant man."

The tragic event is preserved in the old ballad entitled "The Bonnie Earle o' Moray":—

Ye Highlands and ye Lowlands,
Oh, whare hae ye been?
They hae slain the Earle o' Moray,
And lain him on the green.

"Now, wae be to thee, Huntly!
And wherefore did ye sae?
I bade you bring him wi' you,
But forbade you him to slay."

He was a braw gallant,
And he rade at the ring;
And the bonnie Earle o' Moray—
Oh! he might hae been a king.

He was a braw gallant,
And he play'd at the ba';
And the bonnie Earle o' Moray
Was the flower amang them a'.

He was a braw gallant,
And he play'd at the glove;
And the bonnie Earle o' Moray—
Oh! he was the Queen's luve.

Oh! lang will his lady
Look frae the Castle Doune
Ere she see the Earle o' Moray
Come sounding through the town.

Another ballad, not nearly so meritorious as the one just quoted, commemorates the same event. In it the Earl is spoken of as Huntly's brother-in-law. The Marquis visits Moray while he is staying at Donibristle, and the gates are unsuspectingly

opened to receive the guest who turns out, as in fact he is, a "fause traitor."

Open the gates and let him come in;
He's my brother Huntly, he'll do him nae harm.

He's ben, and ben, and ben to his bed,
And wi' a sharp rapier he stabbed him dead.

The lady cam' doon the stair, wringin' her hands—
"He has slain Lord Moray, the flower o' Scotland."

But Huntly lap on his horse, rade to the king;
"Ye're welcome hame, Huntly, whaur hae ye been?

Whaur have ye been, and how hae ye sped?"
"I've killed the Earl o' Moray dead in his bed."

"Foul fa' ye, Huntly, and why did ye so?
Ye micht hae ta'en Moray, and saved his life too."

Her bread is to bake, her yill is to brew;
My sister's a widow, and sair do I rue.

Her corn grows ripe, her meadows are green,
But in bonnie Dinnibristle I daurna be seen.

This version of the heinous crime, we know, is altogether erroneous. How far the monarch was connected with the murder we shall see later on. Young Moray was not slain in bed. The old house of Donibristle, with its magnificent environments, stood on a gentle eminence looking proudly over the placid waters of the Firth of Forth. When Huntly arrived at Donibristle House and asked the Earl to surrender in the King's name, Moray refused, and a conflict between the two parties ensued. Huntly set the house on fire, and the young lord had the bleak alternative of sallying forth and running the chance of death by the sword or of being burned alive. Dunbar, whom we have already mentioned, came to the rescue. With the most heroic self-sacrifice he offered to lay down his life for his master. "I will go," he said, "out at the gate before your

Lordship, and I am sure the people will charge on me, thinking me to be your Lordship, and, under cover of the darkness, ye shall come out after me and try to defend yourself."

No sooner said than done. Dunbar rushed forth. During the broil with the noble servant the Earl managed to burst through the assailants, and made for the cliffs which lay below. Unfortunately his tippet had caught fire in the sally, and this circumstance betrayed his whereabouts to his bloodthirsty enemies. "They came doune on him on a suddaine," remarks the historian with quaint graphicness, "and ther most cruelly, without mercy, murthered him." Gordon of Buckie struck the initial blow, and then compelled Huntly to perform his share of the tragedy, at which the craven knight plunged his dagger ruthlessly into the face of his victim, who calmly upbraided him for spoiling a better face than his own. The brave Dunbar also fell covered with wounds. Buckie, says Archbishop Spottiswood, was immediately despatched to advertise the king of what had happened, while Huntly himself fled speedily northwards, leaving Captain Gordon, his cousin, lying on the ground severely wounded. Next day the captain was taken to Edinburgh and publicly executed for his share in the tragedy.

The question arises, what was the real cause of the Bonnie Earle's death? And here, let me say, we tread on debatable ground. Historians and ballad-makers both are at variance over the solution. It seems to me that it was very much like a repetition, secularly, of course, of the death scene of Thomas à Becket. You remember how Henry II., when he heard of the acclamations with which the people of England received the exiled archbishop on his return, exclaimed, in a burst of fury which soon spent itself, "Is there none of the cowards that eat my bread who will free me from this turbulent priest?" The desire at once became the deed. You are aware of the dramatic result: ere many days had passed Becket was no more.

Nobles thirsting for vengeance, and waiting eagerly for a stray word to fall from their prince's lips, which would enable them

to wreak that vengeance, and yet stamp it with a goodly show of lawfulness—that was the cause of Becket's death; that too, methinks, was the cause of the Earl of Moray's tragic end.

To understand Huntly's part in the tragedy—and, in our opinion, he was the principal actor—it is necessary to bear in mind the Bonnie Earle's relation to the Good Regent. He had married, as has been hinted, the Regent's elder daughter Elizabeth, and, through her, acquired those vast possessions which belonged to the Earldom of Moray, thereby laying himself open to the enemies of his father-in-law. We must now go back a generation. In 1562, at the battle of Corrichie, in Aberdeenshire, the Regent Moray had all but annihilated the Huntlyan clan, the old Earl himself being killed. The family feuds had not yet subsided; there were embers burning low which required only a little stirring up, and Huntly was the man to do it. Just then he stood in high favour with James VI., and the vulture was on the lookout for the shot—in this case the word —which would seal his rival's doom. Moray had given refuge to the Earl of Bothwell—"Clydesdale's ancient lord"—who had been guilty of treason, and this was made the excuse for Huntly being sent to arrest him.

Assuredly the Aberdonian went a step too far, for, when news of the iniquitous crime spread throughout the country, loud cries of revenge arose. Many hearts bled softly, and many eyes were dimmed with tears, for the Bonnie Earle was much beloved by the common people. There were murmurings of rebellion, and James thought it advisable in the circumstances to go to Glasgow for safety.

The testimony of contemporaries, however, is always strong, and there were not wanting those who asserted that jealousy on the part of the King was the real cause of the murder. This may seem ridiculous. James had a face as incomparable with that of the Bonnie Earle as—well! as east is from west, and therefore could experience no pangs of jealousy in beauty's line. Yet perhaps on one occasion he had been piqued by some

remark of his Queen, who certainly thought a good deal of the young nobleman, and a stray word let fall, you know, may topple down mighty kingdoms. If some such word did escape the Queen's lips, and unleash the bloodhounds who were waiting for their prey, the beautiful old ballad of "Young Waters" may refer, as has been conjectured, to the fate of the unfortunate Earl.

The only difficulty is that in this ballad the knight is taken to the Heading Hill of Stirling, and there meets his doom: otherwise there seems every possible reconciliation between it and the Earl's life, only Moray was not the king's sister's son, but the king's cousin-in-law. Ballads, as everybody knows, in their march from mouth to mouth become distorted; reciters have their likes and dislikes; here a stanza is interpolated, or another is omitted, to suit the taste, and the poem is expanded, or cringed, as the case may be. Putting two and two together, Queen Anne's "ill-waled words" were at the root of the tragedy, and the "wily Lord" Huntly was but too anxious to take the monarch at his word, and immediately set off on his nefarious mission. Such was the general and openly expressed opinion of the people at the time, and Balfour, who ought to know more about the incident than we, writes:—

"The ressons of these surmises proceidit from proclamatione of the Kinges, the 18 of March following, inhibitting the younge Erle of Moray to persew the Earle of Huntly for his father's slaughter, in respecte he, being wardit in the castell of Blacknesse, was willing to abyde his tryell; averring that he had done nothing, but by the King's commissione; and so was neither airt nor pairt of the murther."

After a time Huntly was set at liberty, and things went on again as if nothing had happened. Meanwhile, however, the Earl's mother, Lady Doune, had the two bodies put in coffins and conveyed over to Leith, intending to carry them through the streets of Edinburgh, accompanied by a banner on which was represented the naked body of her son, with a cloth round

the loins, and showing the gaping wounds he had received. Out of the mouth of the murdered nobleman issued a scroll, bearing this inscription:—"GOD AVENGE MY CAUSE; Feb. 7, 1591. Aetat. 24." James, however, hearing of the intention, commanded the magistrates of Leith to take possession of the bodies. For divers months they remained unburied; but at last the earth reclaimed its own again, yet no man knoweth where the Earl's sepulchre is unto this day.

Such was the sad fate of the "Bonnie Earle o' Moray." The dark, wild, restless sea of rage and enmity had swept over his noble head, and brought his bright locks to an early grave. On the threshold of manhood he was cut down by felon strokes, but posterity has enshrined his name in loving hearts.

Thou wert faithful, thou wert brave,
But not truth might shield thee
From a false and shuffling knave.

Tales of Inchcolm.

ISLANDS are always interesting. They possess a charm of which great masses of land, because of their magnitude, are devoid. Some, like the Bass Rock, are encircled with a Patmos-like halo of fascination—islands where the lonely prisoners of the Covenant saw visions and heard music in the silent watches of the night. Some again, like Iona and Inchcolm, contain the ruins of what were once huge monastic piles—the thankfulness of monarchs—where monks did penance, and where, ages before, Druids offered up in wicker cages human sacrifices to their idols. What a story, too, many of them could tell !—how war had laid its devastating fingers on the surrounding land; how, in the dim antepast of time, barbaric sea-rovers have ravaged their shores with hard-hearted mercilessness; how gallant barques have been swept upon their rocks, and their crews gone down to a watery grave unhonoured and unknelled.

Inchcolm is an island fascinating to the tourist and the archæologist alike—one of those "emeralds chased in gold," round whose shores the billows of the Forth play their never-ending swish-wash game, and over which the billows of Time have swept gloomily and fathomlessly. Aemona was the name it once bore; and if anything be in a name we can readily conjure up a picture of what Inchcolm would be in the times long passed away. Anglesea or Mona, and Aemona !—such is the darksome copartnership. The name is suggestive of Druidism, signifies, in fact, the Island of the Druids, and

carries our minds back to the ages when old Grandfather Pict was an idolater.

> Screams round the Arch-druid's brow the seamew—white
> As Mona's foam ; and toward the mystic ring
> Where Augurs stand, the Future questioning,
> Slowly the cormorant aims her heavy flight,
> Portending ruin to each baleful rite,
> That, in the lapse of ages, hath crept o'er
> Diluvian truths. And still the primal truth
> Glimmers through many a superstitious form
> That fills the Soul with unavailing ruth.

That was the Pagan night-time, when superstition made thralls of rich and poor, of chieftain and bondsman ; when minstrels stirred the warlike ire of their princes, or chanted their funeral dirge ; when conquerors, sweating with gore, dragged home their vanquished foes at the chariot's tail, and made thanksgiving offerings of them to their idols. Then Urien, the high-priest, led his heathen host to battle, and twitched his bow, sending a poisoned dart to find repose in the heart of an enemy ; then bards, nurtured amid silent retreats, laid down their harps and snatched up the avenging sword to wed it to deeds that would never die.

A change came. The dark and mysterious Paganism which had inspired our ancestors with trembling awe, paled before the approach of Christianity. Columba arrived with his gladsome tidings of salvation, won the hearts of the tattoed and beast-adorned savagelings of Pictland, and despatched his disciples over the whole country

> Ere yet an island of the sea
> By foot of Saxon monk was trod.

The Word spread and fructified. Then the Saxon came, and Thor fell, and Odin too, afflicted and dismayed before the spear of the liberator ; and the messengers of the new tidings found homes for themselves in " some dry nooks scooped out of living rock."

Eight centuries ago Aemona had its hermit, and on the island may still be seen the remains of his single-windowed oratory, with its stone roof. Here he dwelt his anchoritish life, wearied of the world and its moil, finding food at morn and noon, at dewy eve and the silent hour of midnight, on penitential tears, which strangled the worldly pride in his decaying frame, and sapped away the strength of his existence. A strict Columban Culdee this anchorite seems to have been, and for one whom the world has ceased to charm it would be difficult indeed to find a more fitting retreat. Regarding this recluse, a wonderful story, something like eight hundred years old, comes down to us, and, though shrouded in the mists of antiquity, is in substance so perfectly natural and life-like, that there appears no reason whatever to doubt its veracity.

Bower or Bowmaker of Haddington, the old monastic historian, tells the tale in the Scotichronicon.

When Alexander I., nicknamed the Fierce, was crossing the Forth at Queensferry, a terrific storm arose, and drove the vessels seawards, casting the King and his attendants on the island of Aemona. Here they were deferentially received by the pious anchoret we have already referred to, and made sharers, for the time, of the shelter of his home and the benefit of his prayers. Thanks to the enthusiastic antiquarianism of Sir James Simpson, the hermit's chapel—presumably the oldest stone-roofed building in Scotland—has almost been restored to its original worthiness. "It is a single, vaulted chamber, bearing a striking resemblance to the oldest and smallest Irish churches and oratories, and, like them, stands east and west. The interior is about sixteen feet in length, with an average breadth of five, and a maximum height of eight feet. A window of very small dimensions in the eastern gable sheds a dim light throughout the chamber, and a recess in the wall underneath is supposed to mark the site of the altar."

In this humble abode of pain and want, of veneration and simplicity, the storm-stayed monarch found protection, and

learned, moreover, "the luxury of doing good." A solitary cow that grazed on the luxuriant herbage of the island and a few shell-fish which the sea yielded supplied the wants of the hermit, and on such meagre hospitality the Sovereign and his retainers fared gladly, if not sumptuously, for three days, during which time the storm raged unceasingly, and lashed the sea to fury. On the abatement of the tempest the King was rowed safely over to the mainland, having previously made a vow that he would erect, to the memory of the pioneer of Culdeeism in Scotland, an asylum for those who might be in peril on the deep. And the warlike monarch was as good as his word. From that day onwards the name Aemona has grown dim before the surname Inchcolm or Columba's Isle; and to-day, in the picturesque, weather-beaten, but still stately ruins of the monastery which makes Inchcolm so invitingly and ravishingly interesting, we behold in very bodily shape indeed Fierce Alexander's reverential offering of gratitude.

M, C, ter I, bis et X, literis a tempore Christi,
Emon, tunc, ab Alexandro fundata fuisti,
Scotorum primo, structorem Canonicorum,
Transferat ex imo Deus hunc ad astra polorum.

Such is the "jingling rhyme" which the old chroniclers have, in their goodness of heart, bequeathed to what would otherwise be an unenlightened world, and which the author of Aberdour thus fittingly interprets:—

An M, a C, three I's, and X's two,
These letters keep the year of Christ in view,
When Alexander First gave Emon's Isle,
His kingly gift—a rich monastic pile.
May God translate the noble Founder's soul
To regions high above the starry pole!

These lines give us a pretty liberal, if rude, idea of the foundation of the Monastery which is, therefore, 776 years old. Here, however, we have no intention of giving a lengthened

treatise on the sacred edifice, and so haste on to some of the miraculous stories related about its patron-saint.

In 1335 an English squadron of seventy ships appeared in the Firth of Forth, and laid in ashes the towns and villages on both sides of the river. The Monastery of Inchcolm became a cynosure to the eyes of the devastators, and one crew, more headstrong than its fellows, forcibly entered the sacred edifice, which was dedicated to the memory of St Columba, and plundered it of its most rare and costly ornaments and relics—even impoverished the shrine by carrying away the sacred image of the patron-saint himself. Thus laden they set sail for home. But Heaven took immediate steps to vindicate her own rights, and a speedy retribution pursued the crime of the sacrilegious mariners. Without a moment's warning, Aeolus, the storm-fiend, let loose his angriest blast which, driving the ships from their moorings, dispersed and shattered the whole fleet. All at once the rock-bound shores of Inchkeith loomed close in front of them like avenging demons, threatening them with instant destruction. Then did their consciences smite them. Struck with terror and remorse, they fell on their knees before the sacred idol, confessed their crimes, and solemnly promised to make abundant restitution if they were allowed to go scot-free.

And the Saint heard them. The raging winds abated, stilled were the angry waves, and the tempest-tossed vessels were carried on the bosom of a gentle breeze to the tranquil haven of Kinghorn. There atonement was made. The spoils of war were landed, and returned, along with a handsome present, to the brethren of St Colme's Isle. And, as a token that the recompense was propitiatory enough in the eyes of the injured saint, fair winds sprang up from the west and wafted the repentant mariners homewards.

The lesson, however, was inefficacious and soon forgotten, for, ere another year had run its course, the Southrons were back at their old tricks again. This time the puissant King

Edward himself invaded Scotland, and marched as far north as Inverness. And while Windsor stormed through the country, the English navy, numbering over one hundred men of war, anchored in the Forth, while their crews carried their ravages far and wide. The whole seaboard of Fife, from Culross to Kinghorn-ness—that is, the Green Cape—bore evidences of their pillaging and ruthless fingers. The Church of Dollar was despoiled of its beautifully-carved wainscot, a present from the Abbot of Inchcolm, which the marauders took to pieces and placed on board one of their vessels. Flushed with success, they started for home in high glee—dancing and laughing and singing over their good fortune, as their water-steeds bounded joyously on the top of the waves.

But alas! how short-lived was to be their hilarity. Columba's saintly shade had been a witness of all their manœuvres, and was on the lookout for them; and, just as the fleet was steering past Inchcolm, his wrath burst forth like a torrent, and the sacrilegiously-loaded vessel, with its ill-starred crew and ill-gotten gear, dropped like a ball of lead to the bottom of the ocean. Affrighted and dismayed, the other seamen vowed they would never again molest or interfere with the vengeful saint and his possessions.

Yet another scene, a tragic one, too, was to be enacted on that old romantic isle. Great ills need great cures; so, when the Southron depredators come back thirty years afterwards to rehearse their evil games, the patron-saint rises in all his majesty and might to avenge the cause of his disciples. On this occasion they are evidently bent on the utter annihilation of the monastery, for an outhouse has already been fired, and the wind is driving the long-tongued flames Abbeywards. On the sea-beach crowds of apprehensive men and women are gathered together, fearful for the safety of the building and its inmates, with whose lives their own are so closely knit; some are on their knees beseeching Columba to avert the impending doom, when all at once the Saint appears and drives back the

INCHCOLM MONASTERY.

devouring flames from the church, which thus miraculously escapes destruction.

Another tale of the famed Arch-Culdee is told by Abbot Bower. The monks had spent the summer and autumn on the mainland for fear of invasion. On the approach of winter they returned to their island home. Next day the Abbot despatched Alick Made, the cellarer, to shore to bring the provisions and some barrels of beer. In the afternoon they set out on the return journey, but before leaving had imbibed rather freely of the inebriating liquor. Ere they were half-way over, the cellarer and the two rowers would, in spite of fate, hoist the sail, which was no sooner done than the steersman lost control of the boat which rapidly filled and sank, the three of them being drowned. The others, who had that day attended the celebration of Mass in the Church of Dalgety, were saved, Columba appearing in bodily form and rescuing the Canon by means of a rope, while the other two clung to a wisp of straw till they were snatched from the jaws of death by some fishermen.

Needless to say, the monks of St Colme's Isle were held in the greatest veneration by their superstitious contemporaries, and the miraculous powers they possessed were stared at with open-mouthed wonder and awe. The legend of Sir Alan Mortimer, or Alan de Mortuo Mari, which Vedder has wedded to Parnassian language, shows how far our forefathers believed the inhabitants of the Abbey to be supernaturally endowed.

The morning's e'e saw mirth and glee
In the hoary feudal tower
Of bauld Sir Alan Mortimer,
The Lord of Aberdour.
But dool was there, and mickle care,
When the moon began to gleam;
For Elf and Fay held jubilee
Beneath her siller beam.

Sir Alan's peerless daughter was
His darling frae infancie;

She bloomed, in her bower, like a lily flower,
Beneath the light o' his e'e.
Her eyes were gems, her brow was bright,
Her tresses black as jet,
And her thoughts as pure as the dews of even
On the virgin violet.

The woodbine and the jessamine
Their tendrils had entwined ;
A bower was formed, and Emma oft
At twilight there reclined.
She thought of her knight in Palestine,
And sometimes would she sigh,
For love was a guest in her spotless breast,
In heavenly purity.

The evening sun had sunk beneath the Ochil Hills, the ever-restive waters of the glassy Forth had ceased to mirror back the mystic flooding of the golden west, Vesper had ascended the starry vault of the heavens to keep her nightly vigils, and the moon began to flash her radiant beams on holm and sea ere Emma left her bower. On the daisy-decorated lea the fairy court was holding its nocturnal revels, and anon the air vibrated with the soft and mysterious melody as the fairies touched the gossamer strings of their elfin virginals. And while the weird, unearthly music rose and fell on the air, now soft and trembling, now gay and triumphant, while the lovely fairies danced and the little goblins carecred around them to guard them from intrusion, while the king of fairyland looked anxiously about the enamelled sward for some one to be his Titania, he espied a form that outrivalled all the beauties of his graceful court. 'Twas Emma Mortimer!

Quick as the vivid lightning gleams
Amidst the thunder storm,
As rapidly the elf assumed
Lord Bethune's manly form.
As flies the cushat to her mate,
To meet his embrace she flew ;

Like a feathered shaft frae a yeoman's bow,
She vanished frae human view.

The Abbey bell, on the sacred isle,
Had told the vesper's hour ;
No footsteps are heard—no Emma appears—
Sir Alan rushed from his tower.
The warders they hae left their posts,
And ta'en them to the bent,
The porters they hae left their yetts,
The sleuth-hounds are on the scent.

Porters and warders and vassals have all vacated the posts, and are now searching hill and dale and wood for the unfortunate maiden. Sir Alan follows in the wake of the hounds, when all at once they stand stock still, trembling like aspen leaves, and refuse to proceed. With an aching, breaking heart the Knight laments his daughter's fate, and bids his men haste to the holy Abbot that lives on St Columba's sacred shores, and tell him that a son of the Holy Kirk implores his ghostly aid. Across the two-mile channel that separates the island from the coast they dash, urged on by the untardy oars, and reach the chapel door just as the Abbot is chanting his midnight hymn before the shrine of Columba.

His saintlike mien, his radiant een,
An' his tresses o' siller grey,
Might hae driven to flight the demon o' night,
But rood or rosarie.
The messenger dropt upon his knees,
And humbly thus he said—
" My master, a faithfu' son o' the kirk,
Implores your ghostlie aid."

" And ye're bidden to put sic armour on
As is proof against glamourie,
Lest the fiends o' nicht hae power to prevail
Against baith him and thee."
The Abbot leaped lightly into the boat,
And pushed her frae the strand,
An' pantin' for breath, 'tween life and death,
The vassals rowed to land.

No sooner does the boat touch the beach than the Saint leaps ashore, and, grasping the Baron by the hand, bids him have patience. "Fear not, my son," he says, "all the fiends of hell I shall drive from ybur castle and barony." But the Knight can brook no delay. "Restore my daughter," he cries, "and the half of my gold this very night shall be laid on St Columba's shrine, and the half of my lands ere morning's prime be given to thy Abbey."

The Abbot replied, with priestly pride,
"Hae patience under your loss,
There never was fiend withstood me yet
When I brandished the Holy Cross.
Forego your fear and be of good cheer,
I hereby pledge my word
That by Mary's might, ere I sleep this night,
Your daughter shall be restored."

Well might the holy man speak thus. As a barefooted friar he had made a pilgrimage to Jerusalem, had slept in the Holy Sepulchre, and seen visions there. In "cool Siloam's shady rill" his girdle had been seven times laved; the crucifix which was suspended from his neck was a gift he had received from St Bride himself while in a dream; on his rosary was a miracle-working bead which had already "cured three men bewitched"; and his pastoral staff contained nothing less than a relic of the cross that stood on Calvary.

He carried a chalice in his hand,
Brimfu' o' water clear,
For his ain behoof, that had oozed frae the roof
O' the Holy Selpulchre.
He sprinkled bauld Sir Alan's lands
Wi' draps o' the heavenly dew,
An' the fiends o' nicht, wi' gruesome yell,
To their midnight darkness flew.

Anon he shook his rosarie,
And invoked St Mary's name,

Until sweet Emma's voice was heard
Chantin' the virgin hymn;
But when he brandished the Holy Rood
And raised it to the sky,
Like a beam o' light she burst on their sight
In vestal purity.

Apropos of the Mortimers we give another story which is related by Sibbald, the native historian. Sir Alan, it would appear, was to receive for half his lands a family burial-place in the church of the monastery, but for some inexplicable reason was denied the privilege for himself just at the last moment, for, while his corpse was being carried "in a coffin of lead, by barge, in the night-time, to be interred within the church, some wicked monks did throw the same in a great deep betwixt the land and the monastery, which to this day is called "Mortimer's Deep."

While still called Aemona, the island was the scene of a memorable event in Scottish history which the greatest of English dramatists has woven and immortalised in his tragedy of "Macbeth." In the year 1033 the Danish sea-rovers landed upon the coast of Fife, and, after being vanquished by Macbeth and Banco, were allowed to bury their fallen comrades on Aemona's Isle. Shakespeare pictures Rosse, the Thane of Fife's cousin, as hastening to Forres to acquaint King Duncan of the issue of the fight, and telling him that he has come

From Fife,
Where the Norweyan banners flout the sky
And fan our people cold;
Norway himself, with terrible numbers,
Assisted by that most disloyal traitor,
The Thane of Cawdor, 'gan a dismal conflict;
Till that Bellona's bridegroom, lapped in proof,
Confronted him with self-comparisons,
Point against point rebellious, arm 'gainst arm,
Curbing his lavish spirit. And, to conclude,
The victory fell on us.

Now
Sweno, the Norways' King, craves composition ;
Nor would we deign him burial of his men,
Till he disbursed, at St Colme's Inch,
Ten thousand dollars to our general use.

A rude, coffin-shaped monument marks the place of interment. Once, the old chroniclers assure us—and they saw it in its better days—it was ornamented with sculptured faces, but now, embedded in the soil on the western side of the monastery, is so dilapidated and defaced as to be quite undiscernible. On one side was a warrior holding a spear in his hand, on the other the figure of a cross—thus showing that, in the pictorial representations on the tomb at least, monk as well as knight had probably had a hand.

And, you ask, have no prisoners made the associations of the island more attractive? Ay, truly ; and hallowed them with the touch of holy feet.

Of the tales of imprisonment the latest belongs to the reign of that pitiless monster of humanity, Cardinal Beaton. His victim was the gentle but unbendingly faithful martyr, Dean Thomas Forret, Vicar of Dollar, who belonged to the Forret family, in the parish of Logie, in North Fife. A sterling honest man he was, who, while the impious bishops gloried and thanked their stars (such was the case) that they never knew the Old or New Testaments, went straight to the Word and taught therefrom. For this, and this alone, for keeping his heresy in his sleeve—it was there he kept his Bible—was he burned as a heresiarch on the Castlehill of Edinburgh in 1538.

A century before we find on that small enchanted isle a prisoner of a different stamp altogether. The crime this time is a political one, and the criminal a lady, Euphemia, Countess of Ross, who has been accused of aiding and abetting her son, the Lord of the Isles, in rebelling against their lawful Sovereign, James the First.

The midway scene refers to that excellent and God-fearing man of princely blood, Patrick Graham, Archbishop of St Andrews, who, because he aimed at the reformation of the licentious faction of which he was the head, "was condemned to perpetual imprisonment."

> **Woe to you, Prelates! rioting in ease**
> **And cumbrous wealth—the shame of your estate;**
> **Pastors who neither take nor point the way**
> **To Heaven.**

Inchcolm's sea-girtness and a quartette of warders were deemed insufficient guard for this virtuous man. From Columba's Isle —would that the saint had helped such men!—he was dragged to Dunfermline, thence to Lochleven, where, on the holy isle of St Serf, rest his weary bones until the judgment trumpet sounds for them a joyful awakening.

Anster Fair and Maggie Lauder.

PROFESSOR WILLIAM TENNANT, from whose works we cull the following story, was born in Anstruther on the 15th of May 1784. From his parents, who seem to have been people of more than ordinary abilities, though of comparatively humble station, he inherited a rare love of knowledge. Concurrent testimony places him side by side with Scotland's master-painter, Wilkie. Both were physically impaired, yet of brilliant talent; each eminent beyond comparison in his own style and above his own countrymen. While Wilkie delineated glorious scenes of country life, Tennant rushed all his genius into his "silent-speaking" pictures, drawn from the broad theatre of nature, and each, too, has bequeathed a name that will be imperishable so long as the populace remains and plebeian tastes and customs and feelings survive. These men need no sculptured marble; their names and lives and works live as evergreens in the minds of the people for whom they laboured, and never shall decay.

As a linguist Tennant has had few equals—Greek and Latin, Hebrew and Syriac, Arabic and Persian were all at his finger-ends, the facility with which he mastered them being something remarkable. Among his literary efforts we may mention "Anster Concert" and "Anster Fair," "The Thane o' Fife," "Papistry Stormed, or the Dingin' Down o' the Cathedral," "Cardinal Beaton: a Tragedy," "John Baliol, a Historical Drama," and "Hebrew Dramas"—all of them, with the exception of "Anster Fair," more or less failures. He also wrote a Syriac and Hebrew Grammar. But, if his prose compositions

lacked energy and elegance, besides being devoid of variety and vigour of thought, his "Anster Fair"—a humorous poetic effusion in the then-forgotten measure of the *ottava rima*—raised him to a unique position among the *littérateurs* of Britain, a position till then unoccupied, and from which there is little likelihood of his ever being ousted.

In "Anster Fair" we have a poem chivalrous in its conception and handling, but with the sword and helmet of chivalry doffed, and the garb of innocent mirth and festivity donned—a poem sparkling with the choicest colours of classic romances, yet minus their prolixity and incredible achievements, nevertheless replete with characters and actions welcome to plebeian hearts—a poem in which gallantry kisses the hand to amorous impetuosity, and in whose every line there breathes the honest joyousness of the Scottish soul. The contests are well imagined and well rhymed, the little dialogues introduced here and there spirited and natural and strongly characteristic. In the first stanza the poet launches straightaway into his subject with all the "frolicsome and unbridled" generosity and perspicuity that pervade the whole play, singing the glories of the Great Fair which at that time was patronised by merchants from every corner of Europe; singing, too, "a theme far livelier, happier, and gladder" than all the rhapsodies of ancient Greece and Rome put together—in fine, how the heart and hand of Bonnie Maggie Lauder were won on Anster Loan.

> What time from east, from west, from south, from north,
> From every hamlet, town, and smoky city,
> Laird, clown, and beau, to Anster Fair came forth,
> The young, the gay, the handsome, and the witty,
> To try in various sport and game their worth,
> Whilst prize before them Maggie sat, the pretty,
> And after many a feat, and joke, and banter,
> Fair Maggie's hand was won by mighty Rob the Ranter.

Having invoked the Muses to send but a spark of that immortal flame which inspired the uncontrolled Pindar and the

Chian Homer, the poet is rewarded with a glimpse of Fairyland. Puck is graphically portrayed.

I see the puny, fair-chinn'd goblin rise
  Suddenly glorious from his mustard-pot;
I see him wave his hand in seemly wise,
  And button round him tight his fulgent coat;
I see him ope his dewy lips; I hear
The strange and strict command addressed to Maggie's ear.

It was on a keen and cutting-cold December night that the goblin broke in upon our heroine's soliloquies. Maggie was sitting at supper in her warm chamber, bemoaning her "maidhood's joyless state," weighing the merits of her besieging suitors and a-picking their faults threadbare. Out of the mustard-pot which, on the table, had begun to caper to and fro, he suddenly appeared amidst the smoke—"a fairy of the height of half an ell"—and took his stand upon the table, waving his hand to the amazed and startled damsel—glorious in his garb of golden sheen, by Iris spun in her lofty bower, his eyes sparkling with fiery delight, and his miniature bagpipe hanging gracefully from his shoulder.

He made a bow so dignifiedly flat,
  That Mag was witchèd with his beauish air:
At last he spoke with voice so soft, so kind,
So sweet, as if his throat with fiddle-strings were lin'd:

"Lady! be not offended that I dare,
  Thus forward and impertinently rude,
Emerge, uncall'd, into the upper air,
  Intruding on a maiden's solitude;
Nay, do not be alarm'd, thou lady fair!
  Why startle so?—I am a fairy good;
Not one of those that, envying beauteous maids,
Speckle their skins with moles, and fill with spleens their heads.

For, as conceal'd in this clayhouse of mine,
  I overheard thee in a lowly voice,
Weighing thy lovers' merits, with design
  Now on the worthiest lad to fix thy choice.

I have up-bolted from my paltry shrine,
To give thee, sweet-eyed lass, my best advice;
For, by the life of Oberon, my king!
To pick good husband out—is, sure, a ticklish thing!"

Having apologised for his intrusion, Tommy advises Miss Lauder to select a husband by public competition, and thereby put an end to her spouseless solitude. "And let these," he said, "be the conditions:—

First, on the Loan shall ride full many an ass,
With stout whip-wielding rider on his back;
Next, o'er the ground the daring men shall pass,
Half-coffined in their cumbrances of sack;
Then shall the pipers groaningly begin
In squeaking rivalry their merry strain;
Last, let each man that hopes thy hand to win
By witty product of prolific brain,
Approach, and, confident of Pallas' aid,
Claim by an hum'rous tale possession of thy bed.

Such are the wondrous tests by which, my love,
The merits of thy husband must be tried!
And he that shall in these superior prove—
One proper husband shall the Fates provide—
Shall from the Loan with thee triumphant move
Homeward, the jolly bridegroom and the bride,
And at thy house shall eat the marriage feast,
When I'll pop up again." Here Tommy Puck surceast.

Before departing the elfin creature delighted the maiden with a tune upon the pipes, the like of which, so exquisite and sweet, King Midas in all his lifetime never heard from the stone-affecting lyre of Orpheus. Its effect was magical.

Tingle the fire-irons, poker, tongs, and grate,
Responsive to the blithesome melody!
The tables and the chairs inanimate
Wish they had muscles now to trip it high!
Wave back and forwards at a wondrous rate
The window curtains, touch'd with sympathy!
Fork, knife, and trencher almost break their sloth,
And caper on their ends upon the tablecloth!

And what of Maggie? Could she resist the pipes' awakening air? Sure, no!

> From nook to nook through all the room she tript,
> And whirl'd like whirligig, and reel'd, and bobb'd, and skipt.

At last the magic piper ceased to play, and, bowing a sweet and soft "Good-night!" to the lady, flitted out of sight. The fairy's advice was immediately acted upon. Messengers, swift of foot and brazen-lunged, were despatched and proclamation made; and Rumour, that gossip whose body is one multitude of open ears, in each an ever-wakeful eye and a babbling tongue, blazened abroad, in Lowland vale and Highland glen, the approaching Fair. The beautiful allegorical rendering with which the minstrel ushers in the spring-time has few parallels in human tongue—simple it is, yet powerful, every word standing on its own feet.

> Old Kelly Law, the kindly nurse of sheep,
> Puts on her daisy-tissued gown of green;
> On all her slopes, so verdurous and steep,
> The bleating children of the flock are seen;
> And see how Airdrie woods upshoot on high
> Their leafy living glories to the day,
> As if they long'd t' embrace the vaulty sky
> With their long branchy arms so green and gay!
> Balcarras Craig, so rough and hard and dry,
> Enliven'd into beauty by the ray,
> Heaves up, bedecked with flow'rs, his ruffian side,
> Like giant hung with gauds, and boasts his tricksy pride.

But, lo! on the crest of the North Sea waves brigs and schooners now appear, bringing with them the stores and wares of France and the Netherlands—lintseed, frieze, and linen from muddy Zuyder-Zee, palate-scorching gin from Flushing, the blood of Bacchus-berry from Bordeaux, to wit, the wines of clear-skied Gaul. And soon Anstruther becomes a scene of the wildest hullabaloo and merriment, for the famous Fair draws

nigh. The hurry and bustle grows apace; from all parts of Scotland the people flock.

> In thousands puffingly to Fife they run,
> Gold in their pockets lodg'd, and in their noddles fun.

First and foremost there descend upon the town the high-spirited and mischief-loving students of St Andrews, clad in their academic robes—"a joke-exchanging crew"—and close behind them the learned Professors, radiant in wigs and vestments, bent on seeing the sport.

> And such a mob came trampling o'er Kingsmuir,
> They raise a cloud of dust that does the sun obscure;
> And from Denino's every house and hut
> Her simple guileless people hie away;
> Next, from the well-air'd ancient town of Crail,
> Go out her craftsmen with tumultuous din;
> And from Kingsbarns and hamlet clep'd of boars,
> Sally the villagers and hinds in scores.
> Then, jostling forward on the western road,
> Approach the folk of wind-swept Pittenweem;
> St Monance, Elie, and adjacent farms,
> Turn their mechanics, fishers, farmers out;
> And from her coal-pits Dysart vomits forth
> Her subterranean men of colour dun:
> Nor did Pathhead detain her wrangling race
> Of weavers, toiling at their looms for bread;
> And long Kirkcaldy, from each dirty street,
> Her numerous population eastward throws;
> And from Kinghorn jump hastily along
> Her ferrymen and poor inhabitants:
> And th' upland hamlet, where, as told in song,
> Tam Lutar play'd of yore his lively ranks,
> Is left dispeopled of her brose-fed throng,
> For eastward scud they now as thick as ants;
> Dunfermline, too, so famed for checks and ticks,
> Sends out her loom-bred men, with bags and walking-sticks;
> And from Kinross, whose dusty streets unpaved
> Are whirl'd through heav'n on summer's windy day,
> Jog her brisk burghers, spruce and cleanly shaved,
> Her sullen cutlers and her weavers gay:

Next ride on sleek-maned horses, bay or brown,
The writers of industrious Cupar town ;
From all her lanes and alleys, fair Dundee
Has sent her happy citizens away ;
From Perth, Dunkeld, from Brechin, Forfar, Glamis,
Roll down the sweaty crowds, with wearied legs and hams.

In hot haste, too, flock the Highlanders and Islanders, the Lowlanders and Borderers, Danes and Norwegians, rich and poor, all burning to see the Fair. Amid the Homeric throng the poet espies the hero of the story, and gives us such a description of him that few can read it without feeling the depths of its genuine beauty.

He comes apparell'd like a trim bridegroom,
Fiery and flushed with hope, and like a god in bloom ;
His waggish face, that speaks a soul jocose,
Seems cast in very mould of fun and glee,
And on the bridge of his well-arched nose
Sits laughter plum'd, and white-wing'd jollity ;
His manly chest a breadth heroic shows ;
Bold is his gesture, dignified and free ;
One born and shap'd to shine and make a figure,
And blessed with supple limbs to jump with wond'rous vigour.

The merry monarch of the Scots now arrives, and Anster and Anster House on the eve of the market are one wide, wild scene of revelry. Within the mansion lords and ladies whirlingly trip the mazes of the entangled reel ; some—for generous is the host—sharpen their wits with the nectar that sends the loitering blood a-bounding through their veins ; while, amidst the thousands and tens of thousands on the Green, tumblers and merry-Andrews and mountebanks are enacting the best of Davie Lindsay's plays.

And ballad-singing women do not spare
Their throats to give good utt'rance to their lays ;
And many a leather-lung'd co-chanting pair
Of wood-legg'd sailors—children's laugh and gaze,
Lift to the courts of Jove their voices loud,
Y-hymning their mishaps, to please the heedless crowd.

In the argent moonlight, too, some pour over the Devil's pictured books—others shift the "inch-tall bishops, kings and queens, and rooks over the chequered board"—some play at Fox and Lamb—and

> Others, of travell'd elegance, polite,
> With mingling music Maggie's house surround,
> And serenade her all the livelong night
> With song and lyre, and flute's enchanting sound,
> Chiming and hymning into fond delight
> The heavy night air that o'ershades the ground;
> While she, right pensive, in her chamber nook
> Sits pond'ring on th' advice of little Tommy Puck.

Night runs her course, and morning comes. Up the blue pathway of heaven shines the glorious dawn. Earth laughs, and to Anster Loan haste the admiring crowds—"each brick and pavement-stone wished it had feet that day!"—to pay homage to Bonnie Maggie Lauder who rode at the Red Tod's right hand to the scene of the sports. And as the maiden's trampling palfrey prances tardily through the throng, a shout enough "to split the roundness of the granite-ribbed globe" broke from ten thousand throats. The sky did rattle with the noise!

> The very waving of her arm
> Had power a brutish lout t' unbrutify and charm!
>
> Her face was as the summer cloud, whereon
> The dawning sun delights to rest his rays;
> Compar'd with it, old Sharon's vale, o'ergrown
> With flaunting roses, had resign'd its praise:
> For why? Her face with Heaven's own roses shone,
> Mocking the morn and witching men to gaze;
> And he that gaz'd with cold unsmitten soul—
> That blockhead's heart was ice hewn out beneath the Pole.
>
> Her locks, apparent tufts of wiry gold,
> Lay on her lily temples, fairly dangling,
> And on each hair, so harmless to behold,
> A lover's soul hung mercilessly strangling;

The piping silly zephyrs vied t' enfold
The tresses in their arms so slim and tangling,
And thrid in sport those lover-noosing snares,
Playing at hide-and-seek amid the golden hairs.

Her eye was as an honour'd palace, where
A choir of lightsome Graces frisk and dance ;
What object drew her grace, how mean soe'er,
Got dignity and honour from the glance ;
Woe to the man on whom she, unaware,
Did the dear witch'ry of her eye elance !
'Twas such a thrilling, killing, keen regard—
May heav'n from such a look preserve each tender bard !

So on she rode in virgin majesty,
Charming the thin dead air to kiss her lips,
And with the light and grandeur of her eye
Shaming the proud sun into dim eclipse ;
While round her presence, clust'ring far and nigh,
On horseback some, with silver spurs and whips,
And some afoot with shoes of dazzling buckles,
Attended knights, and lairds, and clowns with horny knuckles.

Soon the Loan was reached, and Anster's beauteous dame took her place beside the king, amid the flower and chivalry of Scotland. There, amid a silence "silent as summer sky," the herald proclaimed the contest and its conditions—the prize fair Maggie's hand and two hundred acres of land, a present from the king. The ass race was first on the programme. One by one the suitors enter the lists, and the virgin's eyes at once single out the manly form of the Borderer—her destined spouse, "the seemliest, stateliest wight" in the arena. She sighs to herself :

"I could—La ! what a grace of form divine !—
I could, in sooth, submit to lose my name in thine !"

But the sound of the brass-toned clarion breaks short her reverie, and in a moment the competitors bound away. "They shoot—they fly—they spur—they whip—they crack—they bawl—they curse—they cry !"—such is the bold spirited description of the author. While asses are backing and thwarting, as asses always do ; while cuddies jostle and rebel,

the ass of Rob the Ranter is speeding straight as an arrow in his ostrich-like flight, half-riding, half-flying on the wings of the wind towards the turning-post. And now he is careering on the homeward track.

> Speed, cuddie, speed—one short, short minute more,
> And finish'd is thy toil, and won the race!
> Now, one half-minute, and thy toils are o'er—
> His toils are o'er, and he has gain'd the base!
> He shakes his tail, the conscious conqueror,—
> Joy peeps through his stupidity of face;
> He seems to wait the monarch's approbation,
> As quiver his long ears with self-congratulation.

Next follows the sack race. Hundreds of candidates turn out to win honour in the contest, forming what the poet calls an awkward and ridiculous show. One after another falls boisterously to the ground, flouncing and weltering in his sack, until only two of the frog-like crew remain—Rob the Ranter and an Edinburgh wag of advocate renown, who had provided himself with

> A sack, whose bottom was with damp impair'd,
> Fusty, half-rotten, mouldy, frail, and thin,
> That he, unseen, might in the race's pother
> Thrust out one helpful leg, and keep incag'd its brother.

Both combatants reached the winning line at the same moment, but the Ranter, being the honest competitor, was pronounced victorious.

And now the sun "towers on the summit of the lucid sky," and the mighty crowd, obeying the ravenous cravings of nature, begin to "eat and nibble, one and all." Luncheon over, there came an item for the suitor pipers, and here the poet's pictures are distinguished by originality as well as beauty, by brilliancy as well as graphicness, the destruction of the instruments of the jealous musicians being told with a rare amount of spirit and faithfulness.

> Then rose, in burst of hideous symphony,
> Of pibrochs and of tunes one mingled roar;

Discordantly the pipes squeal'd sharp and high,
The drones alone in solemn concord snore:
Five hundred fingers, twinkling funnily,
Play twiddling up and down on hole and bore,
Now passage to the shrilly wind denying,
And now a little rais'd to let it out a-sighing.

Then rung the rocks and caves of Billowness,
Reverberating back that concert's sound,
And half the lurking echoes that possess
The glens and hollows of the Fifan ground;
Their shadowy voices strained into excess
Of outcry, loud huzzaing round and round,
To all the Dryads of Pitkirie Wood,
That now, around their trees, they dance in frisky mood.

As when the sportsman, with report of gun,
Alarms the sea-fowls of the Isle of May,
Ten thousand mews and gulls that shade the sun,
Come flapping down in terrible dismay,
And with a wild and barb'rous concert stun
His ears, and scream, and shriek, and wheel away;
Scarce can the boatman hear his splashing oar;
Yell caves and eyries all, and rings each Maian shore.

But suddenly, amid the "tumultuous and unlicensed din," there burst from the spotless blue of the heavens a globe of fire which, alighting on the ring of pipers,

Set their pipes, and drones, and chanters in a flame.

The affronted and disheartened minstrels made from the tragic scene, leaving their black and ashy remnants behind them.

And scarce they off had slunk, when with a bound
Great Robert Scott sprang forth before the King;

and he played; the birds came hovering over his head; the night-roaming bats essayed to leave their darksome clefts; the mermaids splashed exultingly in the Firth; the sea-mews forsook their rocky homes; the Royal James gave his hand to Maggie Lauder, and they danced to the magic strains; the

infection spread to the lords and ladies, and like wildfire took hold of the excited multitude, which swayed and rocked to the unwonted music.

So on they trip, King, Maggie, Knight, and Earl,
Green-coated courtier, satin-snooded dame,
Old men and maidens, man, wife, boy, and girl,
The stiff, the supple, bandy-legg'd, and lame;—
All suck'd and wrapt into the dance's whirl,
Inevitably witch'd within the same;
Whilst Rob, far-seen, o'erlooks the huddling Loan,
Rejoices in his pipes, and squeals serenely on.

And much was Mag astonished, when she thought
(As sure it was an odd, perplexing thing)
That Robert's tune was to her ear the same
As that which Puck had play'd, when from her pot he came.

A victor thrice over, Rob the Ranter is now at liberty to claim the guerdon of his toils, the hand of Anster's winsome lady; but, to cap his achievements, he asks King James's permission to ope his budget and tell his witty tale, for he, too, has "tapped Apollo's rhyme-o'erflowing cask." The narrative occupies nearly the whole of the fifth canto. It is the love-tale of Susan Scott, "a lady young and fair, and beauteous as the budding spring," and Charlie Melville, the squire of Carnbee, her accepted wooer, whose sorrows begin one evening when the two are out walking. With love's wordy power the youth essays, as he has often done before, to impress his suit; in courtship's frivolous way he calls his loved one "angel, sweeting, fondling, dove," and Susan is just on the point of naming the fateful day,

When lo! out springs, in maddest pitch of wrath,
Pitcorthie's biggest bull upon their peaceful path.

Melville heroically defends the lady, but in the struggle loses his nasal organ, which is wrenched from his face by the animal's horns. Six weeks he remains within doors, "waiting his nose's re-establishment," but gone, alas! for ever, was the good old

nose. When next he presents his defeatured visage at Thirdpart he is scouted by Miss Sue, who meantime has bestowed her hand on another admirer, and rudely beaten and kicked discourteously by her guardian, Sir Michael Scott, "the sorcerer stout and dire." As Charlie turns home disconsolate, Tommy Puck appears and unfolds to him "a scheme of nice revenge," for the elfin fay is the injured lover's knight. On Miss Sue's wedding day he is to burst into the dining-hall when the company are feasting; and, said the goblin:—

"Thou in a corner of the room shall see
Sir Michael's magic staff, the same that basted thee.
Snatch up that magic, energetic stick,
And in thy clench'd hand wielding it with might,
On Michael's white, bald pate discharge thou quick
A pelt enough to stun the wizard wight:
Strange consequence shall follow from that lick;
Yet be not thou amazed or struck with fright,
But, springing to the table's upper end,
Let on his niece's nose an easier pat descend."

And to show the knight that he is not fooling him, Tommy

From a vial silver-bright
Pour'd out upon his palm a powder soft and white;
And to his mouth uplifting it, he blows
The magic dust on Melville's blemished face,
When—such its power!—behold, another nose
Sprouts out upon the scarr'd and skinless place.

Charlie obeys the goblin's behests; Michael is metamorphosed into a hare, and scampers out at the open door; Miss Sue's nose sprouts and sprouts to a prodigious length, her back grows "most mountainous and high," while every squire ha-ha's and every dame te-he's as each droll excrescence rises; and Melville, his resentment appeased, goes home to Carnbee, blessing Tom Puck and the whole fairy fraternity. On the completion of the tale, and after the deafening acclamations had subsided, the herald blew the signal for dispersing.

Then came the dénouement. King and courtiers attend Maggie to her house—

For be it known
In th' East Green's best house fair Maggie staid,
Near where St Ayle's small lodge in modern day
Admits to mystic rites her tippling masons gay.

There supper is prepared, and joke and jest go merrily round. Scott attributes his conquests that day to neither fortune nor chance, but tells them how Dame Puck had commanded him to seek renown at Anster Fair, and promised him assistance, saying—

"And know, when at the Loan is tried thy skill,
Thy ass I'll nettle on with spur unseen;
Into thy bones and sinews I'll instil
Great vigour to o'erjump the quaking green;
Thy bagpipe's pouch with tempest I will fill,
Lending thy tune a witchery not mean;
And from thy study-rack'd perplexed brains,
A merry tale I'll squeeze, the helpmate of thy pains."

Later on Mr and Mrs Puck make their appearance upon the table, and explain how they aided Rob the Ranter in his achievements at the Fair, in order to pay off an old-standing grudge against Sir Michael Scott, who had consigned them to their ignoble tombs, and forbidden them to meet

Until the fairest maid of Scottish land
Should to the supplest of all Scotland's men,
Charmed by his jumping, give her bed and hand.

This was the outcome of helping Charlie Melville to wreak his vengeance upon the Scotts. But now the fays are happy in their united liberty once more; their penance is completed.

"The work is done—the supplest man is found;
He sits the Bridegroom and the Landlord there;
The fairest maid of all the realm around
Sits yonder, star-like shining in her chair.
Farewell! may joys be rained on each of you;
Adieu, thou Bridegroom sweet! thou bonny Bride, adieu!"

Such is the story of Anster Fair, and now we bid farewell to Tennant. What think you of him? A great man truly, in whom, though the poetic passion was well-nigh wanting, there was a keen sense of the ludicrous in all things. He is the great meridian luminary of the *ottavan* measure, of which Boccaccio was the morning star. A great man truly, with all his learning; accomplished, yet generous; simple and unaffected; earnest and energetic in his labours; a man in whom there was no vanity, no insincerity; a man affectionate and unselfish, who had been tried in the furnace; such a man as one meets but once in a lifetime; one of those who make others' bliss their own,

> And walk among the sons of men,
> Rejoicing as a child.

The Storied Dust of Lindores.

The Abbey frowned
With massive arches broad and round,
That rose alternate, row on row,
On ponderous columns, short and low.
—*Marmion.*

IT was eventide. Heaven's brilliant eye of day had just gone down behind the lofty bens of the Grampians, and his rosy pinions were trellising the western sky with glorious bands of red and gold. On the hillsides of the richly-pastured Ochils was shed the crimson twilight: it deluged land and water; it flooded the valley of the Tay with its mellow mystic beauty, and fell, one living concentration of lingering splendour, aslant the blue and green waters of the noble river, as, after his rude impetuous career from Highland hills, he rested himself in the fair plains of Gowrie.

On this particular night—towards the end of July 1484—Nature is horribly, apprehensively quiet. All the air holds a solemn stillness, like the stillness—the awful, mysterious calm that heralds the bursting of a tropical storm. A load even seems to lie on the hearts of the canorous merle and thrush, for they are pouring forth their deep-toned modulations haltingly,—there is pity and sorrow in those sweet notes which rise and fall, then rise again and stop so suddenly and warningly.

And the black monks of Lindores, good men, tried and true, the most of them, have deviated from their wonted regimé. The compline, the last of the daily devotions, has been said; still the brethren have not retired. To-night expectation is on

tip-toe; to-night one of Scotland's noblest warriors is to join their holy brotherhood.

> Lance, shield, and sword relinquished, at his side
> A bead-roll,—in his hand a claspèd book,
> Or staff more harmless than the shepherd's crook,
> The war-worn chieftain quits the world—to hide
> His thin autumnal locks where Monks abide
> In cloistered privacy.

Mark this chieftain well! A captive he comes, compelled by his sovereign to spend the waning years of his lifetime—and a wild rugged lifetime in veriest truth it has been—within the Abbey walls of Lindores. James, Earl of Douglas, the dreaded Black Douglas, is his name. Yes, we repeat, mark him well, for he is turning his back for all time upon the world against which he has so often fretted and fumed, and been so much at wars and variance. The casque he has doffed to don the cowl—the implements of strife laid aside for the staff of peace—feudal rapine and bloodshed forsworn for nocturnals and matins and vespers—beauty and chivalry and power spurned for cleansing fires and a celestial diadem. And in the old monastery, somewhere under the sod of those grass-carpeted aisles, hallowed by the tread of godly man,—somewhere among those time-ravaged and ivy-screened walls, rest the ashes of that ill-starred knight.

Who does not know the story of the Douglas wars? Rising to an enviable eminence in the person of the renowned and chivalrous Good Lord James, Bruce's friend and courageous comrade, the House of Douglas had grown by leaps and bounds. Fondled by Dame Fortune, with monarchs to aid and abet her, they possessed almost a third of Scotland, besides the dukedom of Touraine in France, while thousands of gallant, if sometimes licentious, warriors followed their master to war. In the course of time the Douglasses became a race who would not be said nay—a race with whom a host had always to reckon, and reckon cautiously. But Prosperity is ofttimes the mother of inordinate Pride, and Pride as often goes before a fall. So was it with the Douglasses.

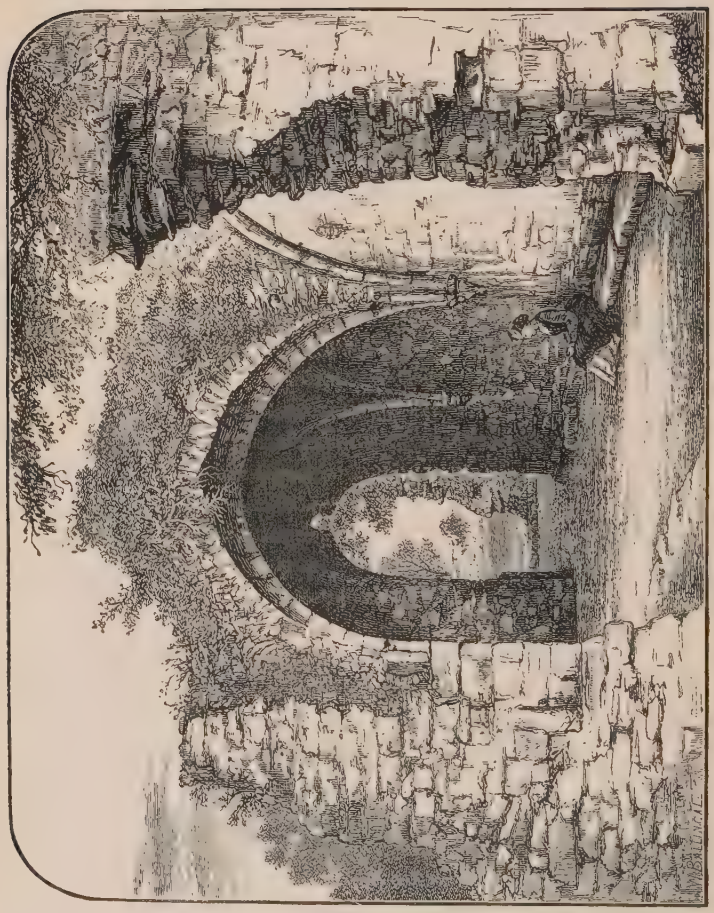
In the reign of James II., the redoubted family attained its highest pitch of pride and power. Brave in titles and riches, surrounded by sycophants and counsellors holding a Douglas knighthood, the Earls played the mimic sovereign and held the regents of the kingdom in the most pernicious contempt. At length it became evident that, unless regal authority were to be dissolved and trampled under foot, the sooner the dangerous and aspiring House was crushed the better it would be for king and state.

The first scene of the Douglas Tragedies was laid with great care and preparation in Edinburgh Castle, whither the young Earl William and his brother David were treacherously decoyed by the chancellor, Crichton. For some days all went merry as a marriage-bell, but meanwhile a storm was brewing. One evening, as the brothers sat at supper with the king, the fatal Black Bull's head, sure signal of speedy death, was set upon the table. The Douglasses sprang to their feet aghast, their fingers on their swords, and rushed towards the door,—armed men were there,—the hapless youths were instantly overpowered, dragged to the back court of the castle, and beheaded. This was the famous Black Dinner of 1440, in detestation of which someone, generations agone, wrote the following anathema:—

> Edinburgh Castle, town, and tower,
> God grant you sink for sin;
> And that even for the Black Dinner
> Earl Douglas got therein!

And James was still but a youth when, at Stirling some twelve years afterwards, he urged a later Earl, cousin of the murdered nobles, to forego the league which he had formed with the Earls of Ross and Crawford; when, on the knight's refusal, in the heat of passion he drew his dagger, and, exclaiming, 'If you will not break the league, by heaven this shall," stabbed the disobedient chieftain to the heart. Truly, beyond all shadow of doubt, another awful fall!

But the Douglas faction was not dismembered as the rulers



LINDORES ABBEY.

had, by the foregoing events, determined it should be. Like the fabled seven-headed Hydra of superstitious days, which, when one head was lopped off, received two others in its place, the House grew in the midst of all its difficulties. Four brothers immediately donned their weapons to avenge the fate of the fallen Earl, and once more anarchy and gloom threatened to enfold our country in their relentless coils. A cruel civil war raged for three years to decide whether James Stuart or James Douglas was to govern Scotland.

With an army of 40,000 men, the Earl marched against his sovereign, whom he met near the village of Abercorn. Everything was as he could have wished it, but Douglas was undecided: only a narrow brook separated the two forces, yet he hesitated to join battle with the enemy, and that pause, though it was slight, brought about his ruin. Night intervened, and in the morning the hapless knight found himself, like a stranded vessel, left alone—all alone. Nothing remained for him but flight—his castles were ravaged—his possessions were forfeited—his brothers defeated and slain—and he himself, an exile, took refuge in England, and became a pensioner of Henry VI.

But to such an one as James Douglas, ever longing to look on the pleasant hills and smiling green dales which, in his halcyon days, he was wont to proudly call his own, a life of exile and inactivity must have been extremely galling and irritating. It was, therefore, with the wildest hopes that the banished Earl joined the Duke of Albany in an invasion of Scotland by the west. Here misfortune, cruel-hearted misfortune, again awaited him. On St Mary Magdalene's Day—July 22nd, 1484—the raiders rode into the town of Lochmaben, where a fair was being held. A fierce engagement ensued, for thenadays every country-fellow carried arms, and knew, moreover, how to use them. The fight lasted from noon till night. In the end the Scots asserted their supremacy; the invaders were defeated, Albany only escaping by the swiftness of his horse, while the

Earl, unfortunate ever, weighted with years and arms, bowed down with remorse, and wearied by waging wars with such adversity, was numbered amongst the prisoners.

When brought before the king, Douglas, it is said, turned his back upon him, and, out of a true sense of his guilt, refused to look him in the face. But, notwithstanding this, surely the historian is unduly hard when he avers that he was the first Scotsman who taught the Scottish nobility to value English gold, preferments, and pensions, more than the product of their native soil, the honour of their ancient blood, and the integrity of their formerly untainted souls; insomuch that if Douglas had had a thousand lives united in one, he deserved to die as many deaths. Nay, Abercromby, thou hast overshot the mark this time! King James was merciful, and he was the principal person concerned—he was struck with the chivalric bearing, gravity, and grey hairs of the fortune-forsaken chieftain, and gave commands that he should be lodged in the Abbey of Lindores. "He that may no better be, maun e'en be a monk," was all that Douglas deigned to say when he heard his doom.

We may not lift the veil to peer behind—nay, 'twould be sacrilege on our part even to speculate on that humble and reverent life spent within the cloisters of the ancient monastery. Ere the soul snapped its worn-out fetters, however, one more scene of that sad eventful life was to be enacted.

The closing years of James III.'s reign were clouded by misfortunes and civil war. In 1488 the insurrection reached a climax when the rebels set up the King's son in his stead. James in dismay hurried through the country, levying troops from those shires which were still loyal to him. As he journeyed through Fife he bethought himself of the soldier-monk of Lindores, and turned aside to urge, with promises princely and glorious, the aged Chieftain to bestir himself for Scotland's sake and put himself in the forefront of the Royal troops, so that at mention of that dread name, dreadful as the thunderbolt, the spears of the insurgents might drop harmless from their enervated

grasp. Alack! it was not to be. Douglas's thoughts were by this time otherwhere; and though there still lurked deep down in his bosom a spark of that fiery mood which not even age could altogether cool, he was not to be tempted by the splendour of James's offers. "Your Majesty," he said—and the old monk, wearied of earth, raised himself up as he spoke—"has kept the Douglas, like your treasure, too long under lock and key to be of service to you now."

So James Stuart rode away to his sad fate at Sauchieburn, and James Douglas, scorning all that power and beauty and wealth and the world could bestow—aware, too, that "the paths of glory lead, after all, but to the grave"—remained at Lindores, but not to dwell in soft repose.

> Within his cell,
> Round the decaying trunk of human pride,
> At eve, and morn, and midnight's silent hour,
> Do penitential cogitations cling;
> Like ivy, round some ancient elm, they twine,
> In grisly folds and strictures serpentine.

A few months longer he lingered. At last he yielded up his soul, "that transient thing, not utterly unknown," to his Creator; and amid the crumbling walls of the Abbey, joyously hugged by the ivy green, lies his mouldering dust. And as his brethren-monks chanted the requiem over him, may we also reverently whisper, *Requiescat in pace!*—yes, may he rest in peace!

. . . . . .

But the Douglas shrine was not the only treasure over which the monks of Lindores kept vigil. Within those sacred walls lies the dust of old-time tragedy. Near the site of the high altar two small stone coffins, the larger of them not a yard long, may be seen, sunk in the green sod, but open to the blue sky, and of course empty now. Tradition, with old Andro of Wyntoun, the chronicler of Lochleven, to aid it, tells a remarkably strange story regarding these coffins—a story dark and monstrous.

According to the old historian, they contained the bodies of the infant children of David I., Earl of Huntingdon and Prince of Scotland, sixth son of Malcolm Caenmohr who, it will be remembered, succeeded the famous or infamous Macbeth. This David it was who founded the Abbey of Lindores, and from his unbounded generosity to the Church some of us know him better, perhaps, by the name of "The Sore Saint." When his father died the crown was seized by his uncle, Donald Bane. Four years altogether did Donald reign. Twice was he driven from authority—once by Duncan, a bastard son of King Malcolm, yet only to be reinstated by Macpendar, the puissant Earl of Mearns. The second time, however, he was ousted from the sovereignty without hope of restoration, and fled to the Western Isles. The inhabitants handed him over to King Edgar, by whose orders he was immediately cast into prison, and, to ensure his working no more havoc with the monarchy, his eyes were picked out and his limbs brutally maimed.

The story does not end here. All the while the imprisoned monarch tastes the bitter fruits of adversity his mind is revolving a fearful, blood-curdling scheme of revenge. And to him who waits, to him who bides his time, what opportunities do come! To Donald the opportunity came. It seems that, as time went by, he began to be looked upon as an imbecile, and was permitted to take a breath of fresh air, when it pleased him, in the courtyard of the palace.

One day he had hobbled out, for he was blind and lame, and was sitting, as was his wont, no doubt brooding over his misfortunes, and treasuring in his inmost heart thoughts dark and too fearsome for utterance, when he heard a little child—David's infant son—flichterin' about in the sunshine and making the courtyard resound with his merry prattle. This was Donald's chance. He called the child to him as if to make of him, and the little fellow, sympathetic perhaps with the old prisoner's infirmities as children most often are, clambered up on his knee and clasped him round the neck, whereupon Donald, with iron

which he had made to fit his nails, stabbed the child's body so fearfully that, after giving one agonising cry, it immediately expired. Its scream brought good Queen Matilda to the spot, who, beholding the murdered babe and the crouching wretch, there and then, says Wyntoun, "for sorrow gave up the ghost," the succession of David's line being only saved by the Cæsarean operation.

Summary punishment was meted out to Donald. He was instantly cast into dungeon—one of those bottle-dungeons so common in those days and from which there was no chance of escape, and kept there, meatless and drinkless, till death ended his tortures. The body of the hapless infant was in the meantime conveyed to Lindores, and entombed in one of those little coffins in front of the altar.

And now, what meant the fate of that infant-boy? It was fraught with terrible misfortunes for Scotland. This it might have meant—no interregnum and the dreadful and disastrous warfare which accompanied it; no need, perhaps, for either a Wallace or a Bruce, however fragrant their remembrance now is; and, above all, no oft-repeated minority of unhappy Stuarts —Heaven bless their memory!—for, had David's son lived, a Stuart may never have sat upon the throne of Scotland.

How closely intermingled are Scottish events and Scottish families! One of Donald's descendants (through Bethok, his daughter), Comyn, was a claimant for the Royal sceptre with Robert the Bruce, whose great-great-grandfather was David, Earl of Huntingdon. To-day the great house of Comyn is represented by Sir William Gordon Cumming of Altyre, in Elgin.

. . . . . .

Yet more! these quiet grey walls have more; they hold in thrall the secret of another darksome tragedy. Long ago Scotsmen had a tale to tell which made the listener's blood run cold and chill—to wit, the atrocious murder of the debonair and chivalrous Duke of Rothesay by his inhuman uncle, Albany. Who does not know that lamentable story, how in the spring of 1402, to satisfy Albany's inordinate thirst for unhindered power,

the Prince was waylaid near St Andrews, conducted amidst a drenching rain to the old mar or tower of Falkland, and thrust into the subterranean dungeon there,—how Albany's minion, Sir John Ramornie, with his savage hirelings, Wright and Selkirk, wrought as calculatingly devilish and unparalleled a piece of cruelty as is to be found in the annals of history,—how the misguided youth, the pride, if sometimes the terror, of his country, was allowed to lie and rot in his fetters, without food of any kind, till death released his troubled spirit,—and how the wasted and squalid corpse of the unhappy victim was hastily coffined and more hastily carried over the hills to Lindores Abbey, far away from the resting-place of his ancestors, for the treacherous villains had caused the rumour to be spread abroad that Rothesay had died of an infectious and dread disease?

Rothesay had married a daughter of the house of Douglas. What thoughts, therefore, must have surged tumultuously through the mind of the soldier-monk when, as he kept his nightly vigils in the Abbey Church, his eye rested now and then on the tomb of the Prince, whose career had been, like his own, a thorny and unprosperous one, and whose descendants, had he lived, would have had the uncooling blood of the Douglasses in their veins! Among other possibilities, too, there might have been no stern conflicts of Stuarts and Douglasses, and no banished Earl at the quiet old Abbey by the Tay.

Mute now is the voice of monkish labour, and peacefully stand the crumbling arches of the Abbey amid poplars and beeches. Otherwise the scene is the same as of old. The voice of nature is not hushed; the merle's mellow note, the chirrup of the chaffinch, the heaven-tuned warble of the skylark, the murmur of the brooklet as it seeks its way adown the glen, the swish of the glittering Tay, the breath of the meadow-sweet are still the same—still as sweetly singing their perennial psalm of praise. And who, thinking thus of the hallowed drama of nature, would ever dream that the old Abbey was the shrine of such strange and terrible tragedies in the drama of life?

The Wanton Young Laird o' Logie.

THE following story belongs to the times of the inventor of baronetcies and divine kingcraft—in other words, to the reign of His Most Gracious Majesty, James VI. of Scotland. According to Spottiswoode, the hero was one "John Weymis, younger of Logie," in the North of Fife, and ballad-makers have commemorated the incident in the song entitled "The Wanton Young Laird o' Logie."

James's reign, in Scotland especially, was little else than a series of rebellions, conspiracies, and turbulence. For this he had himself mostly to blame. He was a laggard in meting out punishments for crimes, and a laggard in the administration of the country's laws. Consequently, ecclesiastical commotions vied with monarchical disorders as to which would be the more violent, and no sooner was the King out of the frying-pan than he was into the fire. In 1592 Francis Stuart, Earl of Bothwell, had concerted a daring scheme against the King's person while His Majesty was residing in the Palace of Falkland.

"There's mony a gallant gentleman
Wha's blude ye hae garr'd to spill,"

says the old minstrel. You remember, probably, that it was this "infamous successor of the more infamous Hepburn" who sowed so much dissension among the nobles during Queen Mary's reign, that brought the bonnie Earl of Moray prematurely to his grave.

Bothwell found willing conspirators, even among the King's attendants at Court. The wanton young laird, who held at the time the position of Gentleman of His Majesty's chamber and

was a great favourite with the King and Queen, seems to have thrown in his lot with the intriguers—for what reason, unless he was influenced by mere wantonness, it is impossible to determine. Anyhow, the plot being discovered, young Wemyss, *alias* Logie, was safely immured in the Tolbooth of Edinburgh. The ballad which narrates his wonderful escape commences in the true spirit of minstrelsy :—

I will sing, if ye will hearken,
If ye will hearken unto me ;
The King has ta'en a poor prisoner—
The wanton young laird o' Logie.

Young Logie's laid in Edinburgh chapel,
Carmichael's the keeper o' the key ;
And May Margaret's lamenting sair,
A' for the love o' young Logie.

Margaret Twinslace, the May Margaret of the minstrel, was Logie's sweetheart and one of the Dutch maids of Queen Anne's Court. When the tidings reached Holyrood that the reckless Knight had been cast into the Tolbooth's gloomy dungeons Her Majesty "sighed right mournfully"; and, wondering what would become of the golden-haired damsel whose heart the gay youth had secretly stolen, went to apprise her of the melancholy news. It crushed the pretty maiden's heart like an avalanche.

May Margaret sat in the Queen's bower
Kinking her fingers ane by ane,
Cursing the day that she was born,
Or that she e'er heard o' Logie's name.

The course of true love never did run smooth. So thought the gentle Dutch girl. In compassion her Royal Mistress seated herself by her side, and poured into her ear all the soothing words of comfort of which she was capable.

"Lament, lament na ! May Margaret,
And of your weeping let me be ;
For ye maun to the King himsel',
To seek the life of young Logie."

May Margaret has kilted her green cleiding,
And curled back her yellow hair—
"If I canna get young Logie's life,
Farewell to Scotland for evermair."

With feelings of hope intermingling with despondency, the young lady hastened to the room of state and, being admitted to the royal presence, dropped beseechingly at the monarch's feet. When King James beheld the woe-begone countenance of the suppliant he was much affected, and asked in surprise—"Why, what's the matter, May Margaret, and what means a' this courtesy?" "A boon, a boon, I beg of thee, most noble liege," sobbed the sorrowful maiden as the tear-drops fell fast and free, "and the first boon that I come to crave is to grant me the life o' young Logie." At this the King became most righteously and most royally angry, but calmed himself sufficiently to reply :—

"Oh, na! oh, na! May Margaret,
Forsooth, and so it manna be;
For a' the gowd o' fair Scotland
Shall not save the life of young Logie."

Blindly, and with a breaking heart, she tottered out of the audience-chamber and down the stairs to acquaint the Queen of the result of her interview with the King. As she staggered along her lips muttered mournfully—"A' the money, he says, in fair Scotland, wadna save my lover's life." And so, tearing her long yellow hair and wringing her fingers in her distress, she reached the Queen's boudoir. "Cease lamenting, Margaret," said the good Anne of Denmark; "I will to the King mysel', and seek young Logie's release."

The Queen she tripped up the stair,
And lowly knelt upon her knee;
"A boon, a boon, I crave, my liege,
Grant me the life o' young Logie."

"If ye had asked me castles and towers,
I wad hae gien them, twa or three;
But a' the money in fair Scotland
Wadna buy the life o' young Logie."

Neither the maiden's tears nor the Queen's solicitations could shake "the wisest fool in Christendom" from his firm purpose. The madcap youth was doomed to die. May Margaret was in a pitiful plight, and in despair threatened to lay violent hands upon herself, saying—

"I'll take a knife and end my life,
And be in the grave as soon as him."

"Oh, fie! na, na!" then spoke the Queen;
"Fie, na! fie, na! this mauna be!
I'll set ye on another way
To win the life o' young Logie."

The brave and noble Queen has determined to gain the upper hand of the British Solomon, and set her heart upon the liberation of the wanton laird. So, drawing her fair companion close beside her, she whispers in her ears a subtle scheme whereby the two lovers may be united. Fair Margaret had her misgivings: she dreaded the wrath of an angry monarch, but, urged on by the motherly affection and advice of the Queen, hastened to put the plan in operation.

She has stown the king's redding-kaim,
Likewise the queen her wedding-knife;
And sent the tokens to Carmichael,
To cause young Logie get his life.

She sent him a purse o' the red gowd,
Another o' the white monie;
She sent him a pistol for each hand,
And bad him shoot when he gat free.

Meantime the moments drag drearily for the occupants of the ladies' bower. In fear and apprehension they listen for the reassuring signal. Contrary to custom, fortune took the side of

love and heroism. The plot succeeded. King Jamie, wearied with the day's work, has retired to rest, when suddenly a pistol-shot rings out on the silent night air. He starts up in his bed and hearkens. And as he listens, he hears steps, familiar steps, under the walls of the palace; hears a voice, a familiar voice shouting under the Queen's window—"Peace be to our royal Queen, and peace be in her company!"

"Oh, whaten a voice is that?" quo' the King;
"Whaten a voice is that?" quo' he.
"Whaten a voice is that?" quo' the King;
"I think it's the voice o' young Logie."

"Gae oot, gae oot, my merry men a',
And bid Carmichael come speak to me;
For I'll lay my life the pledge o' that,
That yon's the shot o' young Logie."

The luckless keeper of the Tolbooth who had, as he supposed, set his prisoner free by virtue of the Royal tokens which the Queen's messenger brought to him, soon presented himself, quite at a loss to understand so hasty a summons. James frowned and in an angry voice demanded how it was the culprit had escaped.

Carmichael turned him round about
(I wat the tear blinded his e'e);
"There came a token frae your Grace,
Has ta'en the laird away frae me."

"Hast thou play'd me that, Carmichael?
Hast thou play'd me that?" quoth he;
"The morn, therefore, at twelve o'clock
Your men and you shall hangèd be."

Once more the Queen attempted to beard the lion in his den. "Na, na," she cried, "this mauna be. Fie, my dear love, if ye be gaun to hang them a', ye maun indeed begin wi' me."

Carmichael's awa' to Margaret's bower,
Even as fast as he may drie—
"Oh! if young Logie be within,
Tell him to come and speak to me."

May Margaret turned her round about
(I wat a loud laugh laughed she):
"The egg is chipped, the bird has flown,
Ye'll see nae mair o' young Logie."

The tane is shipped at the pier o' Leith,
The tother at the Queen's ferrie;
And now the lady has gotten her luve—
The wanton young laird o' Logie.

Spottiswoode's account, though meagre, gives us a little more insight into what turned out to be, after all, a serio-comic drama. A seemingly inevitable tragedy was converted by the Queen's fearlessness into a most ludicrous comedy. The Archbishop says:—"Coming one night, whilst the King and Queen were in bed, Mistress Margaret showed the keepers that the King called for the prisoner, to ask of him some questions. The keepers, suspecting nothing, for they knew her to be the principal maid in the chamber, conveighed him to the door of the bedchamber; and making a stay without, as they were commanded, the gentlewoman did let him down at a window by a cord that she had prepared. The keepers, waiting upon him, stayed there till the morning, and then found themselves deceived. This, with the manner of the escape, ministered great occasion of laughter; and, not many days after, the King being pacified by the Queen's means, he was pardoned, and took to wife the gentlewoman who had hazarded her credit for his safety."

It is a pleasure, too, to know that the unfortunate Carmichael did not suffer for his mistake. His was a name not unknown either in history or romance. He was the hero of the ballad called the *Raid of the Reidswire* in 1575, being at that time Scottish warden of the middle marches. Four years before the incident related above he received the captaincy of the King's Guard, and to his care state criminals of rank were committed. On the 16th of June 1600, he was murdered by a band of Border dalesmen at Raesknowe, near Lochmaben, whither he was journeying to hold a court of justice.

An Archetype of Ecclesiastics.

Down—down—down!
With windlass, and chain, and cord,
For no step is hewn for foot of man
Into that deep gulf abhorr'd.

DOWN—down—down into the horrible dungeon of St Andrews Castle goes the body of George Wishart, the noblest, the gentlest, yet the most powerful of Scottish martyrs, to await

The chain, the stake, the gazing crowd,
The grim and torturing fire,

to which Cardinal David Beaton, the savagest and most notorious of Scottish ecclesiastics, has consigned him. Well has St Andrews, despite its memorable Castle by the sea and its venerable Cathedral, been called "the Metropolis of Darkness!" Many deeds and bloody have been perpetrated there—deeds at which the world grew pale, atrocities of the most shameful cruelty that called forth the most terrible retributions.

Consider the state of the Church in those days—that is, 400 years ago—and do you wonder that the nations of Europe revolted from the papal yoke? Behold even the places of worship themselves turned into market-places, and the pulpits made rostrums, from which the dissipated and worthless monks, like common huxterers at a country fair, vended their wares and sold their master's indulgences—nothing more nor less than mere slips of paper with a few badly scribbled promises—to the

highest bidder, cash down, of course, for which beneficence the Pope blotted out the purchaser's sins, with the assurance that Heaven's gates were always ajar for him, that there was no dark river of Eternity for him to cross, no Slough of Despond, and promised him, when he grew tired of the earthly world, a seat in the Heavenly, at the Creator's right hand! How could—really, how could anyone let such a chance slip by?

Epitomized, the story of Beaton is this.

In 1494 he was born—exactly a hundred years after the poet-king of Scotland. His birthplace was the ancient mansion of Balfour, that used to stand on the bank of the river Orr, near Markinch. He was indisputably and illimitably renowned by descent: of "Bethune's noble line of Picardie," a family tracing its origin to a Robert Faissaux de Bethune of the tenth century. Younger son of John Beaton, the foundation of a brilliant fortune is laid for him as soon as he enters the world. For a while he is admirably educated at home under the watchful eye of his uncle James, Archbishop of Glasgow, and grows up an enthusiastic and energetic boy; far-seeing and penetrative for his age; willing to learn, and learning much.

Such is David Beaton when he goes up to the University of St Andrews, at fifteen—a singularly attractive lad in many ways; polite, perhaps artfully so, yet withal of rather pleasing address. But the young student, being ambitious and industrious, soon exhausts all the knowledge obtainable at St Andrews and Glasgow, and is accordingly sent by his uncle, in 1511, to the schools of Oxford and Paris, to study civil and canon law, but chiefly to bring him under the notice of the Regent Albany. The plan works well. David returns home, is made rector of Campsie. Albany is made to hear of the famous rural clergyman: sees him, and is struck with the extraordinariness of the young man—he is but twenty-four—the large, intelligent head, the powerful memory, the fluent and eloquent speech; sees in him, too, the making of as brilliant a politician as he is an ecclesiastic—sees all these things and determines to make a use of them.

Thenceforth Beaton's career is sparkling, dazzling, and he runs his race by leaps and bounds. Nothing seems to please him now. There appears to be no office vacant but he gets it. In 1519 the Scottish ambassador at the French court dies—Beaton secures his place; and when he comes back to Scotland five years afterwards, more cultivated and polished by French contagion,

CARDINAL DAVID BEATON.

certainly more pompous, more insinuating, yet openly more admirable, more diplomatic as a politician, his uncle who, in the meantime, has been appointed Primate, places on his head the mitre of the rich Abbey of Arbroath, and as Abbot does Beaton soon after sit in the Scottish Parliament.

There he attracts the attention of his sovereign, James V., throws all his heart and soul into matters relating to Church

and State, wins applause by apparently advancing the welfare of his country, while all the time he is strenuously furthering his own private ends, for his love of power and pelf, though sagaciously over-ruled, is immeasurable. Beyond all shadow of doubt, he is "the favoured one in the king's dominions." In 1528 the Red Tod, as James the Fifth was often nicknamed, raises him to the Lord Privy Sealship—makes him, in short, his chief counsellor; and in this new sphere he shines as if nature had designed him a ruler of men. The courtiers feel the weight of the comity and commandingness of their young but artfully able colleague, and give way to him; the clergy feel it; the king himself feels it, and Beaton wields the helm of affairs —civil, canonical—powerfully and dexterously. Five years later he visits the French court, avowedly to negotiate James's marriage with the Princess Magdalen; in reality, however, to supplicate the friendship and co-operation of Francis and the Pope in protecting the Catholic religion in Scotland. A lovely, fragile flower is brought over, but only endures our northern clime for scarcely two months, and Beaton is once more despatched to France to solicit the hand of Mary of Lorraine, daughter of the Duke of Guise, himself solemnizing the ceremony in St Andrews Cathedral in 1538.

But these missions are not without personal advantages to the rising ecclesiastic. How verily indeed does he go on improving each shining hour! Francis admires his firm, manly carriage, his vivacity, his inestimable zeal and worthiness as a diplomat, and displays his admiration of these virtuous traits by making him a Christmas present of the remunerative Bishopric of Mirepoix in Languedoc.

And now Beaton has been spending a considerable portion of his time in France, being, in fact, much attached to it—it is his ancestral land, you remember—and becomes deeply versed in Italian and French politics, becomes "more, indeed, of a Frenchman and a servant of the Guises than of a Scotsman." Yet so it is, unhappily for himself, for his church and his

country, whose welfare he has all along endeavoured to identify with his own success in the spurious, subtile system of foreign politics.

When he returns to Scotland, he is appointed colleague to his uncle. The latter is growing old, is infirm and indolent; his nephew, on the other hand, is in the prime of life and vigorous and daring. Pope Paul III. is nothing loth to observe these signs, and, taking the tide at the flood, hastens to encourage one who seems so discreetly resolute yet actively sincere in his devotion to papacy, by raising him to the cardinalate. And when his uncle dies in the following year, the cardinal succeeds him as Archbishop of St Andrews and Primate of Scotland.

Hitherto, Beaton's career has been one of the most licentious profligacy. Think of it!—think of the duplicity of this remarkable man, a genuinely honest, earnest, apostolical man, some writers would have us believe, yet a profligate spending even his priesthood in concubinage. Up to this time he has concerned himself principally with managing his own affairs; now he begins a vigorous persecution of the Scottish reformers, repairs to St Andrews with such a pomp and splendour as the inhabitants of the cathedral city have never beheld—still only

> "a cumbrous load,
> Disguising oft the wretch of human kind
> Studied in arts of hell, in wickedness refined."

There he lays before his first great ecclesiastical council his schemes for the defence of the Church, and his plans for the extirpation of the Protestants: and he is determined to carry the King himself into this bold enterprise. James has promised to meet "his brother of England" in a conference at York: the arrangements are complete, but Beaton suddenly interdicts and commands—he never persuades, oh no, no! not he—his royal master to forego the conference and prepare for war. On him, too, must fall the blame of the ignominious defeat of the Scots at Solway Moss in 1542—an event which

breaks the king's heart, and momentarily interrupts the harmony of the cardinal's ere-this unchecquered career.

In this way did it happen, and herein we witness the avarice, the unscrupulousness, the detestable ambition of the man. Rumour has it that Beaton poisoned his sovereign, but this, no doubt, is a malicious slander: certain it is, however, that he suborned a priest to forge a will, purporting to be the king's last testament, appointing him regent of the country. The document is rejected by the nobility, many of whom, along with the Earl of Arran who has been appointed governor, are unfeignedly supporters of the Reformation or English party.

Beaten in this game the wily prelate pours forth, in retaliation, from his adamantine throat tongues of living flame, for the purpose of rousing the populace to oppose the friendship with England, a Protestant country. But here again, the Scottish estates are beforehand with him; when he enters the Convention in 1543 he is seized and thrown into prison to put a restraint upon his tongue. Even then, however, he is not cast down. His temperament may be cold and repellant to his warders, but if accomplishments and blandishments, if unscrupulousness and cunning—and he is brimful of all of these—will in any way procure him his liberty, be sure he will soon get it. And, strange to say, somehow or other—no one really knows how—he is released, and with lightning-like rapidity soars higher than ever. The Queen-Dowager becks and bows to him as a menial to a master; the Regent Arran, who the one day proclaims him a rebel, is glad to go down on his knees and crave absolution from him the next.

But he does not stop here. Nothing will please him but to be regent, if not in name, at least in all but name. He covets the Chancellorship of the realm, and Gawain Dunbar, who has held it and discharged its duties faithfully for seventeen years, is forced to relinquish it, so that Beaton may get it. Nor does he stop here! Before him dangles the ladder of Canonicity—every rundle of which is filled but the highest. That empty

rung becomes a perpetual eyesore to him. Shall he essay it? Why not? He possesses ambition enough for it—in scholarly attainments he is without doubt excellently well fitted for it. It is the darling wish of his heart, and he requests—nay, commands Arran to solicit for him at Rome, and in 1544 he receives his crowning glory by being endowed with the authority of *Legate à latere*, or Vice-Pope in Scotland.

This new office places him beyond the reach of the law: he becomes the supreme judge—the Grand Inquisitor—and such is his jurisdiction over life that he can either kill or keep alive, a power which he exercises with an unstinting hand.

For a month or so he plays the rôle of the honest judge, finds that Christianity is labouring under two evils, the obtrusion of the Protestant faith which is growing apace, and the depravity and corruptions of the clergy; but the relentlessness and vigour with which he urges on the persecution of the Reformers overshadows all the good intentions he may have had for rooting out the immorality of the priests. He looks like a man adapted in every way for strife, more often a conqueror than the reverse, strongly passionate, correspondingly fearless; and so, with an ardour which nothing can abate, and a despotism that will brook no opposition, he carries on his untiring, pitiless sport of heresy-hunting.

With a powerful band of licentious prelates and bloodhound supporters he harries the eastern shires; at Perth visits five heretics with "Jethart justice"—killing them first and sitting in trial upon them afterwards—and drives many of the most influential citizens out of the town, confiscating their estates to replenish his own private exchequer, and thereby systematically enriching himself at the expense of the nation. Thence he storms through Forfarshire, and men's hearts shrivel and their blood stands still as the scorching blast of his tyrannic rage passes; seizes Rogers, a black friar, in Dundee, and hurls him into the dungeon of St Andrews Castle; and then—to contemplate, with fiendish pleasure, his horrible work, and prepare

his plans for the future, repairs to Arbroath, where he leads his life of libertinism and watches with eagle eye the proceedings of the revivalists. Informers he has everywhere: his foes are detected and seized, as it were, before they are conscious of it, and once within the grasp of his terrible talons no power of earth can save them.

While in the Mearns, news is brought to him that George Wishart, the backbone of the Protestant party, is in East Lothian waging the religious warfare. Thither he hastens with all speed, captures Wishart—a runagate thief they call him—and casts him, too, into the rock-hewn dungeon of St Andrews. Beaton asks the Regent to send a commission of laymen to act along with the prelates in the trial—how shamefully two-faced he is!—but the Regent will have nothing whatever to do with it, and the Vice-Pope, gnashing with rage for being dictated to, goes to the very extremity of his papal jurisdiction and condemns the gentle preacher to be burned at the stake. Once more the godly man, full of faith and power, is hurried back to his dismal cell, where the only sound that breaks the stillness is

> "The stormy wave,
> As it beats against the rock
> With a faint and distant shock."

In the morning, while the Cardinal and his bishops are drinking and feasting and making merry, while the people gather with anxious and awe-stricken faces round the fateful spot, while the workmen pile up the fagots before the castle gate, George Wishart, the most concerned individual in the whole city, is quietly dispensing Scotland's primal Protestant communion to a band of faithful adherents. And now all is ready,—the "most godly, learned, and noble" of Scottish martyrs is led forth lamb-like to the slaughter and tied to the stake,—the fire crackles, and the long-tongued, torturing flames shoot up and curve round his body as if unwilling to

touch it,—the populace gazes upon the ghastly spectacle with bated breath and glistening eye, when suddenly, amid the dumbness of the multitude, there is heard from the mass of smoke and flame the voice of the patient sufferer as he beholds the cruel, inhuman monster lolling in all his pomp and pride on the battlements of the castle, and gloating over the dreadful, yet to him delightful, scene, and the crowd strains every nerve to catch the prophetic warning—"He who now looks so proudly out upon me from yonder lofty place shall ere long be ignominiously cast down."

The bloodthirsty deed is done, the crowds disperse and return to their wonted occupations. But the blood of Wishart cries aloud for vengeance, and Beaton's "inhumanity to man" is destined to work him bitter woe. A storm brews, and gathering force as the days increase, begins to howl tempestuously: men — high and low—murmur dark things among themselves, openly and secretly; some even talk of assassination, and the Cardinal, perceiving the ominously lowering storm, begins to fortify his castle. Bold, resolute, unrelenting fragment of diabolism, the Mene, Tekel, Upharsin of thy career is fast approaching. Thy days are numbered, found wanting—prepare!

On the 29th of May 1546, the tempest bursts. A band of fearless, determined men, headed by the Leslies and Kirkcaldy of Grange, actuated by private wrongs and saturated with revenge for the innocent blood of Wishart, break into the castle while the workmen are busy with the defences. Soon they reach the Cardinal's room and command him to open the door; but not till they fire it does he comply: and when the conspirators rush in they find an abject and pitiable morsel of anguish and despair, groaning, "I am a priest; I am a priest. Fie! fie! all —all is gone." Leslie and Carmichael are instant for his life, but Melville restrains them, and, presenting his weapon close to the prelate's heart, says—"Repent thee of thy former wicked life, but especially of the shedding of the blood of that notable

instrument of God, Mr George Wishart, which we are sent to avenge." Beaton pleads—pleads in vain; and the assassins despatch him, and he who

> "Had reigned so long and so triumphantly,
> Is in the dust thrown down so dolefully."

Only yesterday he was ruling Scotland with a rod of iron—now lies he there, with none to do him reverence. His body is salted, and, in fulfilment of Wishart's dying prophecy, cast without ceremony into the dungeon of the sea-tower where the martyr passed many a dreary hour, and the touch of whose sacred feet has made the spot for ever holy ground.

Just a word in conclusion! Taken all in all, Scotland has perhaps produced no greater man—not a great statesman, and far less a patriot, for he neglected the permanent welfare of his country altogether to the entirety of his own, and yet great in many respects: indisputably the archetype of ecclesiastics: talented—politically, socially, scholarly, but allowing his talents to run away with his better judgment: self-interested, enormously so: possessing a relentless strength of purpose, and as tyrannical as cruel; proud, ambitious—the monopoliser of every station in Church and State: one-eyed, cunning, unscrupulous: despicably though openly immoral, and unpardonably so, because head of the Church: not much of a hypocrite, but the most brilliant and unfathomable incarnation of genius, good and bad, this country has ever produced.

James the Fifth's Papingo.

Ane papingo, right pleasand and perfyte,
Of whom the King ane lang time had delyte.
—*Sir David Lindsay.*

THERE do be interesting creatures in the world—interesting people as well as animals, and the least interesting of them all is certainly not the papingo. Papingo, by the way, is but the old Scottish word for the Anglicized popinjay, and a popinjay, all the world knows, is a parrot. Some specimens of the parrot race are gifted with a remarkable power of speech,—some of them would indeed talk for a wager and win, for, nilly-willy, they must have the very last word. Their talk is not by any means edifying, but rather of a nature so unbecomingly impolite and impious that there are moments when one would willingly be alone than be forced to put up with their society. In bygone days monarchs had their popinjays, and these would often vie with the court zany as to which could most dexterously manufacture merriment for their royal masters.

The following remarkable story of the parrot which belonged to James V., the Commons' King, is culled from the works of that worthy courtier and philosopher, Sir David Lindsay of the Mount, the quotations being modernized as far as circumstances will permit. At the outset the poet propounds the broad, bald axiom that

Who climbs too high, perforce his feet must fail,

and to establish his position draws copious illustrations with the aid of his favourite papingo.

A fairer fowl never flew on wing, nor lived there a more famous—not even the famous "groat" parrot that dwelt in the Tower by the Thames. Into the hands of Sir David, King James committed the bird to teach her "language artificial." Her guardian's task, however, was evidently not a very arduous one, for so great was her natural inclination that, without his lore, she could imitate all creatures, feathered and unfeathered, more or less—could, in fact,

> Sing like the merle, and craw like the cock,
> Pew like the gled, and chant like the lav'rock,
> Bark like a dog, and cackle like a kae (*jackdaw*),
> Bleat like a hog, and buller like a bull,
> Cry like a gowk (*cuckoo*), and greet when she was wae;
> Climb on a cord, then laugh, and play the fool;
> She might have been a minstrel gay for Yule.

Truly a wonderful creature and a pleasant companion! And now to the piteous tale of how this fair bird was devoured by Death, and how she lay sorely wounded, yet could not give up the ghost till every mortal man had heard her dying testament. "Who," remarks Tytler, "would not comply with a request so charitable?"

The roseate hues of early morn were glinting athwart the eastern sky as the two companions—the poet and his feathered friend—repaired to the garden of the Mount to enjoy, as was their wont, the beauties of Nature. Flowers fragrant, fresh, and fair embalmed the soft morning air with the sweetest perfumes; and when Phœbus arose on pencilled wings and rived the shadows of night-time, the heart of man and bird rejoiced for very thankfulness. No sign of stir or storm was in the air; Æolus, the wind-fiend, was asleep at home in his tempest-keeping cave, and Neptune had hid his head as if afraid to intrude upon so calm a scene.

> The sound of birds surmounted all the skies
> With melody of warbling musical;
> The balmy drops of dew Tytan updries,
> Hanging upon the tender branches small.

But the time of morning devotions drew nigh, and the poet, preparatory to saying "his hours," set his little green friend upon a branch close at hand. Nature, however, was strong within her. Freedom-loving and impetuous, she at once began to *speill*, and ere her master's orisons were completed had ascended beyond all chances of recapture. Lindsay was at his wit's end.

> "Sweet bird," said he, "beware! mount not too high;
> Return in time—perchance thy feet may fail:
> Thou art right fat, and not well used to fly;
> The greedy gled, I fear, may thee assail."

Like most pampered individuals—and the third line above distinctly intimates that she had been spoiled by the care of a too indulgent master—the parrot scorned the sage advice, making the provoking reply that it was her "kind to climb."

> So, on the highest little tender twist,
> With wings display'd, she sat full wantonly;
> But Boreas blew a blast before she wist,
> Which brake the branch, and blew her suddenly
> Down to the ground with many a careful cry:
> Upon a post she lighted on her briest,
> The blood rushed out, and she cried for a—Priest.

Woe, unutterable woe, filled the guardian's breast as he beheld his pet fluttering in agony among the flowers: tears of grief gushed to his eyes and fell unheeded down, while the poor bird, with many a bitter groan, poured forth a doleful lamentation over her misfortunes and unbidableness. Sir David says:—

> "To hear that birdie's lamentation
> I did approach, under a hawthorn green,
> Where I might hear and see, and not be seen;
> And when this bird had swoonèd twice or thrice,
> She began to speak."

And what, think you, did Lindsay hear? A mournful tirade against fickle Fortune's beguiling, against the abuse of ambition in spurning prudent counsel, against the falsities of the world—

fie to its felicity, its avarice, its pride and corruption !—and the vacillation of its gifts to mankind, making him this day puffed up with the abundance of his riches, the morn with nothing wherewith to buy his bread,—in other words, a pompous lordling to-day, a miserable caitiff to-morrow, for Fortune's gifts are only lent.

All these things did Madame Papingo bear witness to in the testament which she bequeathed, the first legatee being her "Sovereign Lord, Kyng James the Fyft."

> "Prepotent Prince, peerless of pulchritude !
> Glory, honour, laud, triumph, and victory
> Be to thy high excellent Celsitude !
> Since dolent death, alas ! must us now part,
> I leave to thee my true unfeignèd heart."

The legacy consists of apothegms which are propounded by the unfortunate bird for his Majesty's good to edification. Herewith is an epitomized list of her handsome bequests:—

> "Of thy virtues poets perpetually
> Shall make mention, until the world be ended :
> So exercise thine office prudently ;
> In heaven and earth thy Grace shall be commended :
> Wherefore, take care that HE be not offended
> Who hath exalted thee to such honour,
> Of his people to be a Governor.
>
> . . . . . .
>
> So in thine office be thou diligent ;
> But, be thou found slothful, or negligent,
> Or unjust in thine execution,
> Thou shalt not fail divine punition.
> Of virtue then, exalt thy sails on high,
> Trusting to 'scape that fatal destiny.
>
> . . . . . .
>
> And, since the definition of a King
> Is—One that has of people governance,
> Address thee first, above all other thing,
> To put thy body to such ordinance,
> That thy virtue thine honour may advance :

For how should Princes govern great regions,
Who cannot duly guide their own persons?

. . . . . .

The Chronicles to know I thee exhort—
They may be mirror to thy Majesty:
There shalt thou find both good and ill report
Of every prince, after his quality:
Though they be dead, their deeds shall not die.
Trust well, thou shalt be styled in that story,
As thou deservest to be put in memory."

Not everybody gets such princely exhortations. Here, however, it does not concern us whether James acted upon them or not. Madame's next legacy is directed to her brethren at court. Hitherto Reflection has played an important part in the drawing up of the will, but now Dame Experience comes to the aid of the hapless testatrix, and she says:—

"The vain ascents of court, who will consider,
Who sits most high shall find the seat most slidder."

On him that has gained the topmost rundle of the ladder—even on him she tries to impress the lesson that the bitter blast of Fortune which never taketh rest spares neither pope, conqueror, nor king. The higher the ascent, the greater and more grievous is the downcome. "Let not courtiership bedazzle your reason," she adds, "for courts are but transitory things,

Changing as oft as weather-cock in wind:
'Tis thus:—Some men will give you praise as lords,
Who would be glad to see you hang in cords."

Experience teaches fools, but alas! the teaching often comes too late to be of any avail. "In courtdom," Madame says, "are feigning fools, panders, parasites, and flatterers who, for some insignificant service, receive some significant reward, and from a state of servitude are ushered into the midst of the nobles of the realm." From such sycophants as these troubles arise, and in proof thereof the dying lady recalls to the

remembrance of her brethren example upon example. Rothesay was ruthlessly starved to death, his brother was taken prisoner, and his father's heart broke over the two-fold tragedy.

King James the First, the patron of prudence,
Gem of genius and pearl of policy,
Well of justice and flood of eloquence,
Whose virtue doth transcend my fantasy
For to describe; yet, when he stood most high,
By false exorbitant conspiration
That prudent prince was piteously cast down.

Some there were, like the presumptuous Cochrane and his caitiff company, who brought their monarch, James III., to confusion, and essayed to climb so high themselves that they overleapt their ladders and were strangled to death on Lauder Bridge. The vain and wilful ascent of James of the Iron Belt at "Dark Flodden Field," too,—who can forget it? And now events thicken around the shrine of their own memories, but as a warning she dares to fix deep in their minds how

The Archbishop of St Andrews, Beaton,
Chancellor and Primate in power pastoral,
Climb'd next the king, most high in this region;—
The ladder shook—he leapt—and got a fall:
Authority, nor power spiritual,
Riches, friendship might not that time prevail,
When Dame Curia began to steer her tail.

Ere the dying lady concludes the dictation of her second bequest, she takes a long and sad farewell of the royal towns in which she had spent so many happy moments, and leaves a word of comforting assurance, as becomes an advocate going homewards, to her friends at court. She says in the codicil—

"There is no constant court but one,
Where Christ is King, whose time interminable
And high triumphant glory is never gone.
That quiet court, mirthful, immutable,
Unchanging, standeth firm aye and stable;
Dissimulation, flatt'ry, false report
Into that court shall never get resort."

All this, and much more, did the Lyon-King hear as he played the eavesdropper in the shade of the hawthorn-tree. But quicker ears and keener eyes than his had heard and seen the death-fingered bird. In a twinkling a magpie, a raven, and a gled are fluttering round about her, anxious to alleviate the agony of her last moments; and these new-comers the poet deftly arrays in the holy habiliments of a canon-regular, a black monk, and a friar respectively, and pictures them Madame's executors. With many pitiful expressions of condolence they urge her to make provision for her spirit and confess, so that they may give her full remission. Whispered the Pye in her ear—

> "I think your goods natural
> Should be submitted whole into my care;
> Ye know, I am a holy creature."

"I am a holy friar," put in the Gled, while he tenderly held up her aching head, "and have power to bring you quick to heaven. Everybody knows that my conscience is unblemished, and over you I shall pronounce a funeral prayer."

"Father," says Mrs Parrot, "by the Rood! albeit thy raiment is religiouslike, thy conscience or thy memory, methinks, is not untarnished. But last evening I beheld thee treacherously snatch a chicken from its mother near yonder dyke. What say'st thou to that?"

> "I grant," said he, "that hen was my good friend,
> And I that chicken took but for my teind."

Time, however, with the glorious prospect of pickings of parrot bones in the background making their teeth water, whets the appetites of these holy executors, who crave the lady to hasten on her confession while nature grants her grace to do it. Friar Gled, in particular, is urgent. He promises her soul a speedy flight past the door of purgatory, straight on to heaven, on the wings of angels, and assures her that he shall murmur dirges round her grave, sing St Mungo's matins, say the "auld

Placebo backward," and go the length, for her dear sake, of wearing mourning weeds.

"Ah! Father," she replied, "thy words are wondrous fair, yet I fear thy deeds contradict them. The marvel is that ye are not heartily ashamed of your defaults and imperfections, for men say, and that truly, ye are but a downright vagabond and hypocrite, debarred from the Consistory. Begone, then! To put my gear in your possession I will not!"

The inquisitors are tactful. Perceiving that Madame knows much, too much, in fact, of their degeneracy, they conjure her to declare unto them the reasons why people judge churchmen so abominable. She complies, and contrasts them with their peerless, prudent predecessors of the primitive Christian age, when

> The prelates wedded were with Poverty,
> Those days when they flourishèd in fame,
> And with her cousin, lady Chastity,
> And dame Devotion, notable of name:
> Humble they were, simple, and full of shame.
> Thus Chastity and dame Devotion
> Were the chief cause of their promotion.

But the times changed—and in the cycle of events there reigned in Rome's great city a prince who soon found cause of divorce between Monsieur Kirk and Madame Poverty. The marriage was dissolved and Kirk espoused, with great solemnity, to an unpitying and unreasonable but exceedingly wealthy widow called Dame Property. The new wife prospered, while the Lady Devotion, left out in the cold to perish, withdrew to the caves and dens to lead the life of an anchorite. By and by, two daughters appeared upon the scene, goodly to look upon,—to the elder was given the name Riches and to the younger Sensuality.

> This royal Riches and Lady Sensual,
> From that time forth, took all the governance
> Of the most part of the State Spiritual:
> And these, in turn, with humble observance,

Their wits did amorously advance
As lovers true, their ladies for to please :
God knows if even then their hearts were at ease !

Study, prayers, and preaching all forgot, they fell victims of Sensuality. No longer would they be enthralled by wedlock vows. Their consorts were sent adrift, so that licentious husbands might the more easily lead their lustful existences unfettered. Dame Chastity was declared an apostate. "Shall we," they cry, "receive what Rome has refused and condemned? Nay, go hence ; find a place for thyself among the nuns." From the nunnery, however, she was expelled to gratify the whimsical pleasures of Madamoiselles Riches and Sensuality—she fled for refuge to the Friars, and they denied her admittance, and slammed the door in her face.

"Where be she now?" inquired Friar Gled.

"Not among you, I assure you," replied Madame, "but with the Sisters of the Sciennes. There she has found Poverty, her cousin, and Devotion, her twin-sister, and Faith, Hope, and Charity, and a host of other virtuous maidens, as yet unpolluted ;—nathless, defended by six great cannon, surnamed Perseverance, Constancy, Conscience, Austerity, Labour, and Abstinence, to resist the subversive subtlety of the ladies Riches and Sensuality,—defended, too, by a bombard called *Domine, custodi nos !*—Lord, protect us !—the terror of all who chance to come within its reach and range."

"How long, think ye," sneeringly remarked Canon Pye, "shall these ladies remain, thus solitarily, in such perfection?"

"Brother," answered Mrs Parrot, "just so long as they elect their heads and obey correction. But where, prudent prelates, where was your prescience that took on hand to observe chastity —and not only chastity, but also austere life, and labour, and abstinence?

You know greatness, and ease, and idleness
To Lechery was mother and mistress."

"By the Rood!" croaked the Benedictine Raven, "thou ravest, thus to censure Riches and Property." Then, having put forth his replication, he added, "Thy reason, thou slanderer, is not worth one single mite. The princes of the realm themselves are to blame for putting such worthless pastors in the Kirk to govern souls—men who cannot even guide themselves. Dike-loupers, sharpers, hungry gormandizing wolves, I call them. Great pleasure it were to me to hear a bishop preach, or a dean, or a doctor of divinity, or an abbot, or a parson overflowing with philosophy."

"Alas! alas!" quoth Madame, "they have forgotten how to preach, having been held so long in servitude by Dame Property and her two worthy daughters."

"Ugh! thou'rt an arrant braggart," said Friar Gled; "talk of things thou knowest about. Go on with thy confession!"

Then she her shrove, with devout countenance,
To that false Gled which feign'd himself a friar;
And when she had completed her penance,
Full subtlely at her he 'gan inquire:
"Choose you," said he, "which of us Brethren here
Shall have of all your natural gear the cures:
Ye know none be more holy creatures."

The Gled and the Corby Monk are thereupon appointed her trustees, and they swear to be true to her as they would be to their own mothers. "And what," whimpered the Pye, "shall mine office be?"

"Thou'lt be overman unto the other two," replied Mrs Parrot, and then she gave directions for the parting of her possessions. "My gay mantle of green I leave to the night-loving Howlet, my bright crystal eyes to the light-avoiding Bat, and my burnished beak to the gentle Pelican. The one-toned Cuckoo shall receive my music with my angelical voice, and the Goose my eloquence and tongue rhetorical.

Then take and dry my bones, both great and small,
And close them in a case of ivory fine,
And them present unto the Phœnix syne,

To burn with her when she her life renews :
In Araby find her without delay ;
Ye shall know her by her most heavenly hues,—
Gold, azure, red, and purple, green, and gray ;
Five hundred years is her life to a day.

When I am gone, tarry not, but speed to the Court and present my heart unto my sovereign-king. 'Tis his alone : I wot he will enclose it in a ring. The rest I leave to yourselves to be parted equally among you. Be true to me. Sorely I suspect your consciences be too large ! "

" Nay, doubt not," they answer with one accord, " we take it with the charge."

" Adieu, Brothers," quoth the pure Papingo ;
" To talking more I have no time to tarry ;
But, since my spirit must from my body go,
I recommend it to the Queen of Fairy,
Eternally into her court to carry,
In wilderness, among the woodlands hoar."
She then inclined her head, and spake no more.

Scarce had the murmured *In Manus tuas*—Into thy hands—died away, when the Black Monk began " to rug and rive" at his deceased benefactress. " Brother ! " said the Friar, but the Raven pretended not to hear. " Brother !" repeated Greedy Gled, " eat softly. While she is hot, part her evenly among us : take you one half, and reach to me the other."

" The fiends seize thee ! " piped Canon Pye. " Why make ye me a stepchild, and I your brother ? Beshrew your hearts, but ye do me wrong !"

" Take these," said the Friar as he hastily returned to the attack, " the intestines are thy share." Soon a shower of angel feathers filled the air, and nothing was left except the heart. Catching sight of it amid the hurry-skurry of down and quills, the Magpie cried,

" This pertaineth to the King,
Which to his Grace I purpose to present."
" Thou," quoth the Gled, " shalt fail of thy intent."

With that the Gled the piece clutched in his claws,
And fled his way: the lave with all their might,
To chase the Gled, flew all out of my sight.

This is the powerful story which Sir David Lindsay of the Mount indited to his countrymen some three and a half centuries ago. The narrative is diaphanously clear in its significance,—the poet is *scunnert* at the preposterous licentiousness of the Church and State, and he launches forth all his hatred of the times by flooding the story with streams of swift-flowing, surging, scathing satire. He was, anachronistically speaking, the Bayard of his age—an accomplished knight, "without fear and without reproach."

Adventures of the Jameses.

"HISTORICALLY there is no county in Scotland more interesting or more important than the ancient Kingdom of Fife."

Such is the opinion of a thoroughly competent authority. We make bold to reiterate his words, and therefore deem it befitting to bracket them with quotation marks; nor do we hesitate in declaring that he has only told the truth, and nothing but the truth.

It is really the case—indisputably so—that Fife, for centuries ranked as the eye and hand of Scotland. Ever since the dawn of authentic history it has been intimately associated with Scottish Royalty. Monarchs have been born, have lived and died, and been buried in it; and the whole county is redolent with traditional and historical reminiscences of kingly peace and pleasure. Dunfermline rejoices in its being the birthplace of David II., James I., and Charles I.

> Mem'ries haunt thy painted gables,
> Mem'ries of the Middle Ages, when thy Sovereigns, rough and bold,
> Had their dwelling in thy castle—time-defying, centuries old;

and within its venerable abbey lie the ashes of twenty or so of Scotland's most noble sovereigns, princes, and princesses. On the wave-beat shore of the East Neuk Constantine II. awaits the blast of the judgment trumpet, and Constantine III., his nephew, spent his last years as a Culdean monk at St Andrews, where, some centuries afterwards, were born the two sons of James V. Falkland, too, was the home of the Stuarts when

chivalry bowed on bended knee to beauty, and hunting and hawking kissed adieu to the cares of monarchy. Here the young Duke of Rothesay was barbarously murdered; here also James V. turned his face to the wall and died. Lindores Abbey contains the remains of the unfortunate Duke, and in the ivy-clad ruins of Balmerino rest the bones of Ermengarde, Queen of William the Lion.

Few are the mansion-houses in the "Kingdom" whose walls have not, at some time or other, sheltered prince and peer and monarch, and resounded with the noisy revelry of courtiers. Sometimes indeed the hospitality was rewarded with worse than scanty gratitude. For instance, when the laird of Anstruther entertained Charles II. in the Castle of Dreel, the thankless young profligate paid him off with ridicule, remarking that he had "gotten a fine supper in a craw's nest."

Happily, however, it was not always thus. For the earlier Stuarts, commingled though their memories are with tales of misery and contrariness and untimely death, all Scottish hearts shall ever beat warmly. We admire our own poet-king all the more because he died a martyr in the cause of peace, and, remembering the times in which the Fourth James lived, him we cannot blame too severely. Not he, but the nobles were the cause of him lifting his hand against his father, and he made atonement for his crime by wearing an iron belt and adding a link to it for every year of his life. And when he fell on dark Flodden Field, paying the penalty of his reckless folly, Scotsmen felt, all too keenly, that a bright flower had been plucked from their midst. Peer and peasant mourned for him. To the former he was the soul of chivalry, to the latter always a true friend. So was his son, James V.

Many are the traditional stories told of James the Fifth. He would stroll about the country disguised as a tinker or gaberlunzie, and mingle with all sorts and conditions of men. In the houses of the poor would he lodge like an ordinary traveller, making himself one of them, sharing their humble hospitality

and their hardships. Thus he won the hearts of the common people, and they loved him devotedly.

Some of the stories come from his own pen, for he was an accomplished minstrel—a poet as well as a musician. The ballad of the 'Gaberlunzie Man" describes one of these humorous adventures.

The pawkie auld carle cam' o'er the lea,
Wi' mony guid e'ens an' guid days to me;
Saying, "Guidwife, for your courtesie,
Will ye lodge a silly poor man?"
The nicht was cauld, the carle was wat,
And down ayont the ingle he sat;
My dochter's shouthers he 'gan to clap,
And cadgily ranted and sang.

"Oh vow!" quo' he, "were I as free
As first when I saw this countrie,
How blithe and merry wad I be,
And I wad never think lang."
He grew canty, and she grew fain;
But little did her auld minny ken
What thir slee twa thegither were sayin'
When wooing they were sae thrang.

"And oh!" quo' he, "an' ye were as black
As e'er the crown o' my daddie's hat,
It's I wad set thee at my back,
And awa' wi' me thou should gang."
"And oh!" quo' she, "an' were I as white
As e'er the snaw lay on the dyke,
I'd clead me braw and leddy-like,
An' awa' wi' thee I wad gang."

Between the twa was made a plot,
They rase a wee before the cock,
And wilily they shot the lock,
And fast to the bent are they gane.
Up in the morn the auld wife rase,
And in her leisure put on her claes;
Syne to the servant's bed she gaes
To spier for the silly poor man.

She gaed to the bed where the beggar lay :
The strae was cauld, and he was away :
She clapt her hands and cried " Waladay !
For some o' our gear will be gaen."
Some ran to coffer, and some to kist,
But nought was stown that could be miss'd ;
She danced her lane and cried " Praise be blest !
I have lodg'd a leal poor man.

" Since naething's awa', as we can learn,
The kirn's to kirn, and milk to earn ;
Gae but the hoose, lass, and wauken my bairn,
And bid her come quickly ben."
The servant gaed where the dochter lay,
The sheets were cauld, and she was away ;
And fast to the guidwife she 'gan say—
" She's aff wi' the gaberlunzie man !"

" Oh fye ! gar ride, and fye ! gar rin,
And haste ye find these traitors again ;
For she's be burnt, and he's be slain,
The wearyfu' gaberlunzie man."
Some rode upon horse, some ran a-fit ;
The wife was wud, and out o' her wit :
She couldna gang, nor yet could she sit,
But aye she curs'd and she bann'd.

Meantime, far hind out o'er the lea,
Fu' snug in a glen, where nane could see,
The twa, wi' kindly sport and glee,
Cut frae a new cheese a whang ;
The preein' was guid, it pleased them baith,
To lo'e her for aye, he ga'e her his aith ;
Quo' she, " To leave thee I will be laith,
My winsome gaberlunzie man.

" Oh ! kenn'd my minny I were wi' you,
Ill-faurdly she wad crook her mou',
Sic a poor man she'd never trow,
After the gaberlunzie man."
" My dear," quo' he, " ye're yet owre young,
And ha'ena learnt the beggar's tongue,
To follow me frae town to town,
And carry the gaberlunzie on."

"Wi' caulk and keel I'll win your bread,
And spindles and whorles for them wha need,
Whilk is a gentle trade indeed,
To carry the gaberlunzie on.
I'll bow my leg and crook my knee,
And draw a black clout o'er my e'e,
A cripple or blind will they ca' me,
While we shall be merry and sing."

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Come we now to the story of James V. and the miller of Ballomill. Who has not heard of the "Gudeman of Ballangeich," which was the name the Merry Monarch adopted while rambling in disguise among his subjects, or read of the Knight of Snowdoun, or James Fitz-James, as Scott designates him in the "Lady of the Lake?" Here we have a tale in every way characteristic of him who engaged in deadly combat with the Celtic chieftain, Roderic Dhu, who was

"Brave,
But wild as Bracklyn's thundering wave."

Fitz-James had been out on one of his wandering excursions, when he was overtaken by a storm. It was eventide, and to escape the wrath of the elements he hurried over the Keillour Burn, and begged shelter from the miller of Ballo. The manly carriage of the young, storm-stayed stranger enlisted the sympathy of the miller, and he was made a welcome guest. Orders were at once given for—not the fatted calf—the best hen to be killed and prepared for supper. And when supper was ready the miller, with true hospitality, insisted on the stranger occupying the head of the table, at the same time remarking—"Sit up, for I maun hae strangers honoured here."

Next morning the miller escorted his guest on his journey. They had not proceeded far when the thought flashed upon the miller's mind that his companion might be none other than the king. At once he would have returned home, but James, if nothing else, was whimful, and threw heart and soul into escapades of this kind. To the Royal Palace at Falkland the

miller must go. There, at the dinner-table, a place of honour was assigned him, and on his declining, the King remarked, "Na, na; sit up, for I maun hae strangers honoured here." There, too, he remained a few days, witnessing, if not partaking in, all the gaieties and festivities of the Court, but ill at ease, for his heart and thoughts were with his own mill-wheel. When at last the hour of his departure came James asked him which he preferred—the "twa" parts or the "aucht" parts of Ballomill. The modest man chose the two. Surely, if the proverb be true that "it tak's a lang spune to sup wi' a Fifer," surely the miller was not a Fifer! So he returned home rejoicing—not the tenant as formerly, but a landed proprietor —the Laird of Ballomill.

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Equally fascinating is the next story of the Gaberlunzie King. While hunting one day, he became separated somehow or other from the rest of the huntsmen. Wearied and thirsty, he entered a wayside inn, where he found a tinker treating himself to a tankard of ale. The two fell a-talking, and in the course of the conversation the tinman happened to remark that he would like to see the king. "Perhaps I could help ye," said James, and he took the tinker, bag and baggage, on his horse behind him. So they set out. All at once the tinker asked, "But hoo will I ken His Majesty frae the ither courtiers?"—to which the King replied that the nobles would all doff their bonnets. By and by they arrived at the appointed meeting-place, where stood a company of huntsmen awaiting their prince. In an instant every head was uncovered. "Faith!" quoth the tinker to his companion, "they're a' unbonneted. Which is the king?" "Weel," said the Merry Monarch who never failed to grasp the right end of a joke, with a mischievous twinkle in his eye, "it maun be either you or me," and sudden as he spoke, the tinker dropped in homage at his liege's feet. Tradition draws a veil over his fate. Maybe, as the author of "Historical Antiquities" suggests, he had a

house given him in Kingskettle, and was constituted tinker by special appointment to His Majesty.

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The Gudeman's frolics, however, were not always unattended by danger. Sometimes his intrepidity and prankfulness landed him on the very brink of death, as did his father's before him. We give but one instance. The whole sea-board of Fife is eaten into by numerous caves. Under the Thane's Castle at

East Wemyss may be seen one which, from its acquaintance with royalty, is called the Court Cave. In a frolicsome mood James V. stumbled into this cave at a time when it was inhabited by a gang of gypsies. As is usual with these people of dark features and darker characters, there was much merrymaking, and on the king's part no want of dalliance with the pretty gypsy maidens. He lavished his attentions on the chief's favourite beauty, and thereby stirred up the ire of the patriarch,

who was in a towering passion and smote the girl on the cheek. Thereupon the Knight of Snowdoun drew forth a well-filled purse, and held out a golden Jacobus as a peace-offering to the Egyptian. The glitter of the gold acted like magic on those ravenous eyes, and hurried, stealthy, snake-like glances were exchanged. Fingers sought the hilts of their daggers, and it would have gone hard with Scotland's sovereign had not another stranger, who had likewise strayed into the den, planted himself by his liege's side. With difficulty they succeeded in cutting their way out and reaching a place of safety.

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Ballangeich's sire, too, went through an escapade quite as perilous. Amid the wild uplands of Kettle parish stood, centuries ago, the old tower of the Castle of Clatto, where lived a brigand and his six sons. Seton was their name. James of the Iron Belt happened to pass that way one day, when he was attacked by two of the brothers. A desperate struggle ensued, in which the king cut off the hand of one of his assailants. The two vagabonds fled, and James, dismounting, picked up the bleeding hand. Early next day he visited the castle with a bodyguard, and enquired for the Setons. The old robber gave him a hangdog welcome, and four sons appeared at their monarch's behest. One was not at home, he was informed; the other was ill. The king would brook no denial to his desire to see the sick man, so he was conducted unwillingly to his bedside. "Let me feel your arm, my man," he said. The uninjured hand was held out. "And now—the other;" and as the king seized hold of the handless limb he exclaimed, "So, so, you've lost a hand; maybe I can give you one," producing at the same time the rigid hand. In less than an hour old Seton and his lawless sons were hanging from the neighbouring trees.

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The following story of how the minister of Markinch was snatched from the vengeance of one of the Jameses is worthy of record. In some way, which is not explained, he had offended

the king, and punishment, meet and sure, was to follow; but, after thinking the matter over, the Royal Stuart resolved to pardon the offender if he answered correctly three questions which he would be pleased to put to him.

On a certain day the cleric was to appear at Falkland. Meanwhile, however, the miller who lived near Markinch, noticing his pastor's dowie looks, managed to get to the root of the affair, and there and then proffered to go through the ordeal in his stead. When the day of trial came round, he repaired to Falkland, attired in ministerial garb, and ready to answer whatever questions the monarch cared to ask him.

"What is the depth of the ocean?" said the king.

"Jist the distance, sir, that a stane'll fa' whan it's drappit into the sea," was the instant and rudely correct reply.

"Where is the centre of the earth?" was the next question.

"Richt under my stick," answered the pseudo-incumbent, putting the point of his staff on the ground, "for the earth is roond, an' my stick is pointin' to the centre o't."

"An' noo," said the perplexed sovereign, "can ye tell me what I'm thinkin' of at this moment?"

"Brawly, sir; ye're thinkin' that I'm the minister o' Markinch, but ye're wrang, for I'm the miller o' ——."

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One story more and we are done. The Fourth James carried his humours so far as to dip his frolics experimentally among the sciences. In order to make some discovery on the primitive language of the human race, he sent two infants, under the charge of a deaf and dumb woman, to reside in Inchkeith. There they were to be kept, isolated from the rest of humankind, till they should arrive at a mature age. No doubt the self-learned speech was primitive and rudimental, though the result is not known. Quaint Robert Lindsay says there was a rumour that they spoke good Hebrew, and he carefully adds—"But as to myself I know not but by the author's report."

The Rose-a-Lyndsaye.

The Lord of Buchan in armour bright
On the other hand he shall be.
—*Percy's Reliques.*

THE charming little ballad here presented refers to the "light and gay Lindsays"—a family ancient beyond remembrance, and born of princesses—who took part with the Earls of Moray and Douglas when the latter raided the north of England in 1383. It was written by William Forsyth—born at Turriff in 1818, died at Aberdeen in 1879—a man of fourfold repute as a student, journalist, surgeon, and poet.

Lord Lindsay has inserted it in the family history-book, and it must therefore have been composed before the year 1858. The "seven fair flowers" of the ballads are the famous "children of Lindsay," a patriarchal title, under which were included the Sire de Lindsay or Sir James, Lord of Crawford and Buchan, and the other contemporary knights of that noble family, whom Froissart, the historian, celebrates and describes as the Sire's *six frères, tous chevaliers*—six brethren, cavaliers each one of them. These brethren were Sir David of Glenesk, afterwards first Earl of Crawford, the accomplished soldier and amiable knight who, in 1390, overcame Lord Welles, an English warrior of great renown, in a celebrated passage-at-arms on London Bridge; his younger brother, Sir Alexander the Lindsaye, who, with his cousin, Sir Thomas Erskine, and "a joly company," defeated the English near Inverkeithing; the valiant Sir William of the Byres; Sir

Alexander of Wauchopdale; Sir John of Dunrod, whom Holinshead designates "a near friend" of the heroic Douglas of Otterburn; and Sir William of Rossie in Fife, consort of Matilda who, from the fact of her receiving an annuity in 1434-1452, *ex concessione regis*—out of the sovereign's allowance, is supposed to have been a daughter, legitimate or illegitimate, of the Royal House of Stuart.

The ballad does not tell us the name of the Rose-a-Lyndsaye. She cannot have been the Lord of Crawford's mother, Egidia Stuart, sister of Robert II., for she was married in 1365 to Sir Hugh Eglinton; nor Elizabeth, daughter of that king, who, after the events which the song commemorates, espoused the brave and courteous hero of London Bridge. She may have been, however, either Sir James's *dilecta soror*, *Domina Elisabethe*—his much-loved sister, the Lady Elizabeth or Isabelle, or "the beautiful Euphemia de Lindsay," sister of Sir William of Rossie and the forsaken bride-elect of the Duke of Rothesay.

There are seven fair flowers in yon green wood
On a bush in the woods o' Lyndsaye;
There are seven braw flowers and a'e bonnie bud,
Oh! the bonniest flower in Lyndsaye.
An' weel I luve the bonnie, bonnie rose—
The bonnie, bonnie Rose-a-Lyndsaye;
An' I'll big my bower o' the forest boughs,
An' I'll dee in the green woods o' Lyndsaye.

There are jewels upon her snawy briest,
An' her hair is wreathed wi' garlan's,
An' a cord o' gowd hangs round her waist,
An' her shoon are sewed wi' pearlyns.
An', oh, but she is the bonnie, bonnie rose—
She's the gentle Rose-a-Lyndsaye;
An' I'll big my bower where my blossom grows,
An' I'll dee in the green woods o' Lyndsaye.

Her face is like the evenin' lake
That the birch or the willow fringes,
Whase peace the wild winds canna break,
Or but its beauty changes

An' she is aye my bonnie, bonnie rose,
  She's the bonnie young Rose-a-Lyndsaye ;
An' a'e blink o' her e'e wad be dearer to me
  Than the wale o' the lands o' Lyndsaye.

Her voice is like the gentle lute
  When minstrel tales are tellin',
An' ever saftly steps her fute
  Like autumn leaves a-fallin'.
An, oh, she's the rose, the bonnie, bonnie rose,
  She's the snaw-white Rose-a-Lyndsaye ;
An' I'll kiss her steps at the gloamin' close
  Through the flowery woods o' Lyndsaye.

Oh, seven brave sons has the gude Lord James,
  Their worth I downa gainsay ;
For Scotsmen ken they are gallant men,
  The children o' the Lyndsaye ;
An' proud are they o' their bonnie, bonnie rose,
  O' the fair young Rose-a-Lyndsaye ;
But pride for love makes friends like foes
  An' woe in the green woods o' Lyndsaye.

But should I weep when I daurna woo,
  An' the land in sic disorder ?
My arm is strong, my heart is true,
  An' the Percy's over the border ;
Then, fare ye weel, my bonnie, bonnie rose,
  An' blest be the woods o' Lyndsaye ;
I'll gild my spurs i' the bluid o' her foes,
  And come back to the Rose-a-Lyndsaye.

Richard Cameron:

A Dream of the Covenanters.

IT was night—the gates of even had shut, the amusive songsters of the glade had ceased their plaintive melodies, the voice of nature everywhere was hushed and calm, and with sleep sitting dewy-laden on my wearied eyelids I laid me down in peace to rest. And as I slept, I dreamed that by my dark bedside stood Dame Remembrance with the curtains drawn silently aside. She took me gently by the hand and led me through trackless wastes, and I followed unquestioningly. Under

> Heaven's ebon vault,
> Studded with stars unutterably bright,

we sped, my companion and I, past towering hills and darksome rocky steeps, through forest depths, and over stormy seas and fiercely foaming torrents, until we arrived at a valley of loveliest beauty. The orb of heaven was shining gloriously, the meadow-streams murmured their soft lullabies, and winged songsters poured out their mellifluous trills from brake and grove: Nature indeed was gay.

As we paused contemplatively upon the scene, my guide touched me upon the arm and bade me follow her. At the far-away corner of the beautiful vale which we were traversing lay a town, cradled in the shadow of a high hill, which with difficulty we began to ascend. On reaching the summit Remembrance handed me a perspective glass, commanding me

to focus it upon the scene that stretched beneath, and tell her what my eyes beheld.

In answer I replied, "I see mighty throngs of people passing and repassing like the triumphs of the Roman emperors. There is nothing but happiness there: knightly lords are bowing in homage to queenly beauty, and amid the multitude rides one whose sunlike appearance seems to be the lodestone that sways the merry crowd. Pray tell me, Spirit, what place this is—it looks indeed strangely familiar to me—that glorious pile, that proud fortalice, I surely know it!" "No doubt," she said. "The majestic-looking person you see is Charles II., monarch of Britain; the town is Falkland—a town whose very streets reflect the lives of kings and queens, and that lordly edifice is the Palace. But look again—seest thou nothing on the outskirts of the vast multitude, nothing which seems discordant with such festivity?"

Once more my eyes swept the seething crowd. "I see a young man being railed at and cruelly hustled about by a few bullying spirits," and I inquired who the unfortunate man might be.

"Listen," said my conductor. "The youth who is being so ruthlessly reproached by his fellow-townsmen is one of God's noblest works—an honest man; one of the world's monuments—a virtuous, Christ-like man who has conquered the world and the devil, and now holds aloof from the vile contamination which luxury ever brings in its train. Remember he was not always what he is now. Richie Cameron, as his friends call him, is a victor. Down there where he was born, he has taught his village school, and acted as precentor to the curate of the Episcopal Church, in which faith he had been cradled in his infancy, and nursed and trained in his boyhood."

"How came about this change," I ventured to ask, "this disciplining of the heart to humility, this exilement from all the pomp and method and art to which the pride of religion is so subservient?"

Motioning me to follow, she led the way over the Lomond hill-top and down the western slopes and showed me "a green and silent spot amid the hills." By this the sun had gone down in the golden west, and a deep mist overhung the vale, shrouding the mountain summit. Yet amid the gloom and solitude of the valley we could distinguish the forms of men and women moving silently and eagerly to that lonely spot on the hillside. And as we listened, methought the heavens opened and I heard the celestial hosts pouring forth their angelic songs of praise, while the green vales and wooded heights echoed back the ecstatic melody. I stood entranced, enraptured, forgetful of everything but the music of the angels.

Eft-soons the mists were dispelled, and as the moon rode resplendently across the starry vault of the firmament, Dame Remembrance directed my attention to the end of the vale. Obeying the guiding ray, I looked and beheld whither the multitude we saw in the mist-laden gloaming had gone—some I noticed, too, had swords, and all of them Bibles. Involuntarily I turned to my guiding spirit, and she apparently comprehended the movement, for she said impressively :—

> "Heaven's gates are not so highly arched
> As princes' palaces ; they that enter there
> Must go upon their knees."

"These men," the Spirit continued, "are holding a conventicle or field-meeting. Many of them, had they chosen, might have been the monitors of princes and knights, or the parasites of a court ; but they scorned the sycophantship of fickle monarchs who forbade liberty of worship, and now they are leading a life of religious outlawry, living in caves and rocks, or lurking on the hillsides, not daring

> In face of day
> To worship God, or even at the dead
> Of night, save where the wintry storm raved fierce,
> And thunder-peals compelled the men of blood

To crouch within their dens ; then dauntlessly
The scattered few would meet in some deep dell
By rocks o'ercanopied, to hear the voice—
Their faithful pastor's voice.
Over their souls
His accents soothing came, as to her young
The heath-fowl's plumes, when at the close of eve
She gathers in, mournful, her brood dispersed
By murderous sport, and o'er the remnant spreads
Fondly her wings ; close nestling 'neath her breast,
They, cherished, cower amid the purple blooms.

They are determined men—Covenanters Scottish people call them, but known in heaven by the holy name of Saints—men filled to overflowing with enthusiasm and self-denial. Scotland at present is a deplorable place spiritually. Protestant ministers are being ousted from their churches, and the rulers of this realm are doltish enough to suppose that the influence of these despised spirits who have now taken to itinerant preaching, as you see, is more enervated than theirs. Richard Cameron is one of yonder conventiclers. Someone has been the means of bringing him to hear the Gospel preached in the fields, and he has entered on his anti-Episcopalian labours with all the enthusiasm of a proselyte, and now, after years of trials and persecutions, he is still as zealous, still as vehemently eloquent—you may recognise him yonder—still as unweariedly devoted to his work."

I turned the glass to scrutinize the company, and in doing so I noticed individuals posted here and there, and asked the reason. "The Government has emissaries all over the country, and the outposts you see act as sentinels to warn the worshippers of the approach of the persecutors"; and even as she spoke there was a general stampede on the part of the "scattered few," who seemed to melt away like snow from a mountain side. I was hurried away from the scene; yet, ere I went, methought I caught a glimpse of cavalry entering the vale from the opposite side, and growling like the ferocious denizens of the forests.

Once more the veil of obscurity was lifted, and Dame Remembrance showed me a vessel in full sail scudding across the German Ocean. On board

> There stands the messenger of truth;
> his theme divine,
> His office sacred, his credentials clear.
> By him the violated law speaks out
> Its thunders; and by him
> the Gospel whispers peace.

Anon the ship reached the meadow-green shores of Holland, and when that "messenger of truth" whom we beheld on the historic streets of Falkland one day long ago landed, I saw him heartily welcomed by his exiled fellow-countrymen. Then said one to him, "What news, Brother Cameron?" Richard tells them that he has denounced the indulgences which Charles II. had forced upon the clergy, and in doing so brought down a nest of hornets upon his head. They ordained him to the ministry; and as Mr M'Ward, his co-exile, gave him his blessing, I strained every nerve to catch the words, "Behold! here is the head of a faithful minister and servant of Jesus Christ, who shall lose the same for his Master's interest, and shall be set up before sun and moon in the public view of the world." I took out my calendar, and found that the year was 1678.

Magnetically attracted by this priest-like person whose head I had thus seen prophesied away by his independent co-worker in religion, I besought the genius to let me see a little more of his career. To gratify my wish, she escorted me to her lustrous chariot drawn by the winged horses called Rumour and Belief, and we flew over the main again, back to "Bonnie Scotland," where she set me down on the pinnacle of the Lowther Hills, and bade me cast my eyes along the valley of the River Nith.

"I see men," I replied in obedience to her injunctions, "congregating on the road that leads to Sanquhar; now they are marching towards the town."

I followed them in their course, and saw them hasten straight

to the market-cross, where they halted in a most determined attitude, and I listened to the bold, fearless words, the loud, angry protests they uttered against their earthly sovereign, the Second Charles, declaring him a traitor, a profligate, and a tyrant; and, after a space, the face of the courageous, defiant leader became wondrously familiar to me—it was in truth the countenance of that reverend saint, Richard Cameron. As I continued moralizing upon the peculiar scene that had just passed before my eyes, I beheld the band hurriedly disperse, and immediately after a troop of horsemen dashed into the town under the command of one who, I afterwards discovered, was named Bruce of Earlshall. For a while I lost sight of the brave Covenanters,

> Those godly men, who rose
> Against idolatry with warlike mind,
> And shrunk from vain observances to lurk
> In caves, and woods, and under dismal rocks.

But now and again there appeared a solitary wanderer upon the hillside, with a sword hanging by his side and a Bible in his hand, hunted, like a partridge among the mountains, by the minion dragoons who are striving hard to earn the five thousand merk reward which Government had offered for Cameron's head. Once more I see the gallant, resolute little company gather in a solitary morass known as Aird's Moss; I see them preparing to do battle with their pursuers. And there they stand, comrades in arms as also comrades in faith—a dauntless band.

The summer sun is shining brightly—I discovered on looking at my calendar that it was the 22nd of July 1680—as the royal troops assail them. "Come," I hear Richard Cameron exclaiming to his brother Michael; "Come, let us fight it out to the last, for this is the day that I have longed for, and the death that I have prayed for, to die fighting against our Lord's avowed enemies; and this is the day we will get the crown." I see the glittering steel—I hear the din of battle, the clang of blows, the rattle of musketry, the groans and wails of the wounded and

dying, and amid the wild clamour of the fight there rises piercingly upon the breeze the thrice-repeated prayer of brave Cameron—"Lord, spare the green and take the ripest,"—he rushes sword in hand upon the foe—next moment lies gasping on the turf. I hear the monster Bruce, robbed of his intent to bring the noble martyr to a grievous and tortured end, venting his spleen, and commanding his troopers to cut off Richard's head and hands,—he marches from the death-strewn field with his bloody trophies.

He hastens to Edinburgh with the grim mementoes of his infamous and heaven-provoking victory—to the Tolbooth, where Cameron's father lies a prisoner, and insultingly inquires if he recognises them. "I know, I know them," I hear the old man exclaim in a broken voice, as he fondly takes them in his hands and affectionately kisses them; "they are my son's, my dear son's. Good is the will of the Lord, who cannot wrong me nor mine, but has made goodness and mercy to follow us all our days." Again I see the tyrants fixing the head upon one of the posts of the city, the hands close beside it, with the fingers uplifted as in the attitude of prayer,—I hear the persecutors cry, "There—there's the head and hands that lived praying and preaching, and died praying and fighting."

I felt sad and ill at ease: the ghastly spectacle had made me melancholy. Alas! thought I, surely "man was made to mourn," that his life is reckoned of so small account, that he is derided by his fellows, buffeted about the world and exiled, tormented in life, and harried even in death!

For some time I indulged myself in this vexing contemplation, till I beheld a party of men return with spades and shovels to the battlefield. They buried the headless corpse of their commander and his dead comrades along with him. "In death they are not divided." And while the misty moonbeams shone over the spot, and I lingered on the melancholy prospect—

> There came a worn and weary man to Cameron's place of rest,
> He cast him down upon the sod, and smote upon his breast;

He wept as only strong men weep when weep they must or die,
And "O to be wi' thee, Richie," was still his bitter cry.

. . . . . .

Upon the wild and lone Aird's Moss down sank the twilight grey,
In storm and cloud the evening closed upon that cheerless day;
But Peden went his way refreshed, for peace and joy were given,
And Cameron's grave had proved to him the very gate of heaven.

"Think not, O infinitesimal atom of the universe," said the Spirit, addressing me, "think not the life of such a man is in vain. Down there in the cold, damp sod lies the body of the greatest, the noblest of great men—a martyr in the cause of Truth. He went forth from his birth-place where happiness, wealth, and power were at his finger-tips, and where he might have been honoured among lords—went forth to do good. And much good, too, he accomplished—daring the most stupendous dangers without dreading them. An earnest, energetic, zealous man he was: self-sacrificing, most noble-minded, and high-souled: unfatiguedly vigorous and unmurmuringly cheerful: the idol of the common people, and the honoured one among the Fathers. Ponder well what has been revealed to thee, and when thou hast leisure, go visit

The moorlands of mist, where the martyrs lay;
Where Cameron's sword and his Bible may be seen,
Engraved on the stone where the heather grows green."

"The voice in my dreaming ear melted away." I turned as if to address my nightly visitant, but she had gone. Next day I obeyed her request and visited Aird's Moss, where I saw a small monument with Cameron's name upon it, and his open Bible, as well as the following inscription:—

"Halt, curious passenger, come here and read,
Our souls triumph, with Christ our glorious head,
In self-defence we murdered here do lie,
To witness 'gainst the nation's perjury."

THE GRAVE OF RICHARD CAMERON AT AIRD'S MOSS.

The Struggle for Independence.

LOVE of conquest is an infirmity of the human race. There is no nation under heaven, no party for that matter of it, but is saturated with the overwhelming, avaricious passion. In Paradise it began to look for victims. And down through the æons it has ever been on the outlook for more, finding everywhere some hovel for its squalidity, and treating those who have sacrificed themselves to its wiles with intemperate cruelty. It is an innate imbecility, from whose meshes mankind, even though it were willing—which, as a matter of course, it is not—cannot disentangle itself.

And when this debilitating disease becomes endemic, it makes an out-and-out debauchee of the country that it has laid hold of. Then the downfall is swift and sure. It urged the Plantagenet Kings of England—that sovereign race whose emblem was humility !—to assume unto themselves the overlordship of Scotland. It carried them beyond the bounds of prudence, for it is insane, and insanity is essentially imprudent. It transmitted their memory through clouds of smoke and pillars of fire, made them gorgons in the eyes of posterity, and drenched their fatherland and ours with blood.

In the early centuries of the Scottish monarchy our rulers possessed large territories in England, and, in consequence of this, were obliged to do homage for them to the English King, and acknowledge him as their feudal overlord. Such, according to the ancient historians, was the tenure of the oath :—

"I, ———, King of Scots, shall be true and faithful unto you, Lord Edward, by the grace of God, King of England, the

noble and superior lord of the kingdom of Scotland, as unto you I make my fidelity of the same kingdom, the which I hold and claim to hold of you. And I shall bear to you my faith and fidelity of life and limb and worldly honour against all men; and faithfully I shall acknowledge, and shall do to you service due to you of the kingdom of Scotland aforesaid: as God so help and these holy evangelists!"

The time, however, came when the spirit of fealty became distasteful, and the Scottish sovereigns showed that they had minds of their own, and renounced their allegiance. The torch of war at once blazed forth. English troops poured across the Border to chastise the insurgents—more often, indeed, to be themselves chastised!—and to threaten the country with destruction.

Again and again did this happen. The first incursion, it is true, was a friendly and fortunate one. It carries us back to the coming of the Saxon Margaret. Contrary winds, you remember, drove her ships up the Forth. Malcolm Caenmohr made the princess his queen. And soon a great number of her countrymen came flocking into Scotland, and they, too, found favour in the Scottish monarch's sight. He treated them hospitably and honourably,—he gave them livings, which they bequeathed, with their names, to their descendants. Then, or shortly afterwards, it was that the Lindsays, the Wardlaws, the Ramsays, the Melvilles, the Bethunes, the Sinclairs, the Boswells, and a host of others, settled in our country—not all of them, however, English; some, indeed, were Hungarians in origin, for Margaret and her kinsfolk had been spending the years of their exile in far-away Austria.

But not always so peaceful or beneficial were the English incomings. When Alexander III. and his grand-daughter, the young Maid of Norway, died, Scotland was hurled into a horrible maelstrom of calamities. The ambitious and greedy eye of Edward Longshanks took in the situation at a glance. Here, he thought, was a splendid opportunity for him to meddle with

Scottish affairs. Thirteen claimants appeared for the crown, and by selecting one of these he might easily obtain the supreme authority of the Scottish kingdom. He therefore decided in favour of John Baliol, a man after his own heart—the great-grandnephew of William the Lion. Baliol's claims had been supported by Fraser, Bishop of St Andrews and one of the guardians of the kingdom, who—at Leuchars, 7th of October 1290—addressed to the English king a remarkable letter, which has become an interesting and memorable relic of those rugged times. In this wise wrote the traitor :—

> "To the most excellent prince and most revered lord, Sir "Edward, by the grace of God most illustrious king of "England, lord of Ireland, and duke of Guienne, his devoted "chaplain, William, by divine permission, humble minister of "the church of St Andrew in Scotland, wisheth health and "fortune.
>
> "The faithful nobles and a certain part of the community of "Scotland returned infinite thanks to your Highness. . . . . The "Earls of Mar and Athole are collecting an army, and some other "nobles are drawing to their party; and on that account there is fear "of a general war and great slaughter of men, unless the Highest, by "means of your industry and good service, apply a speedy remedy. "... If Sir John Baliol comes to your presence we advise you "to take care so to treat with him that in any event your honour and "advantage may be preserved. . . . . and let your excellency set "over the people of Scotland for king him who of right ought to have "the succession, if so be that he will follow your counsel."

This letter, penned after the negotiations of the English ambassadors with the faithful nobles of Scotland, was no doubt made Edward's plea for taking upon himself the arbitration of the whole affair; and as arbiter, appointed apparently, as we have seen, by the *community of Scotland*, he, like a wise and open-eyed and crafty man, chose one who would, for his own sake and safety, consider his *honour and advantage* and be ready to *follow his counsel*.

Such a being was John Baliol. Poor worthless creature! he

had not his sorrows to seek: he was to be "a toom tabbard," a sort of waxwork king—in short, a monarch in nothing but name. Edward interfered with the business of the realm,—he goaded Baliol into resistance,—he even went so far as to set the nobles against him. And when the toy-monarch rose in rebellion he invaded Scotland with a mighty army, laid siege to Berwick, and with wolfish bestiality took the town by the most shameful of artifices—"butchering the inhabitants, man, woman, child, and infant without distinction, and converting the sacred edifices into stables for the English soldiery." So great was the slaughter that, in the words of Wyntoun, for

> Two days entire, as a deep flood,
> Through all the town there ran red blood.

Nine thousand—some authors say 15,000—of the inhabitants and defenders were slain, including a great many nobles and gentlemen of Fife and the Lothians.

Then he swept like an angry torrent through the country, razing the strongholds that durst oppose his progress and his tyrannic rage, and filling others with English soldiers. To glut his ire, he plundered the monasteries and despoiled them of their ancient charters and historical archives.

> And into Fife he went and brent it clene,
> And Andrewe's toune he wasted then full plane,

writes Hardynge, the metrical chronicler. Having sated his wrath and vindictiveness the Grand Superior returned home, carrying with him the crown and sceptre and the famous Stone of Destiny. Stupid man! he knew not what he was doing; but—tell it not in Gath!—we, who are Scotsmen, do know.

In the meantime a strong spirit of independence had been growing among the Scots, and all they required was someone to place himself at their head. And, in the hour of direst necessity, a deliverer did arise. This was Sir William Wallace, the knight of Ellerslie, "one of the strongest and bravest men

that ever lived." With a band of devoted patriots he soon recovered all the fortresses north of the Tay except that of Dundee. Thousands flocked to join his standard. His energy, his wisdom, and his knowledge of military affairs all combined to make him the pride and the glory of Scotland.

He had just laid siege to the castle of Cupar, the acropolis of the Macduffs, when a messenger arrived to inform him that Sir Hugh de Cressingham, "the rapacious robber of all our castles," was marching towards Stirling with an army of 60,000 men. Wallace instantly advanced to intercept them ere they could cross the Forth, and, taking up a strong position near to the abbey of Cambuskenneth, awaited their approach. Here the Scots gained a glorious victory. A dreadful carnage took place. The headless corpse of Cressingham, so abhorred on account of his cruelty and oppression, was found among thousands of his followers, while thousands more, escaping death by the sword, were swept away by the surging waters of the Forth.

Flushed with victory, the conqueror at once returned to Cupar, the citadel of which town—one of the strongest fortresses in the Kingdom—soon after capitulated. The fame of Wallace now spread like wildfire, and many of the Scottish chieftains who had formerly held aloof from the plebeian general appeared at the heads of their clans, eager to form a part of the patriotic host. By his glorious achievements he became the terror of England and the darling of his fellow-countrymen. How unpretentious and unselfish, too, was his glory! When the Bishop of Dunkeld hailed him as the Lord's anointed he replied, "Nay, holy father, the royal blood flows in too many noble veins for me to usurp its rights." And to the Scottish warriors who knelt at his feet he exclaimed, "Rise, brothers,—kneel not to me! I am to you what Gideon was to the Israelites——your fellow-soldier and your friend. I will fight for you—I will die for you!" Someone has worded his patriotism so:

"God, countrymen, and fatherland,
Accept the sacrifice!"

Yet there were not wanting those who regarded the noble hero with envy and dread, who indeed considered his rejection of the crown as insincere—as being, in fact, too much like Cæsar, who, you know, was thrice offered the purple and thrice refused it, and, after all, died emperor of the Romans. At last jealousy gave place to open revolt, and Edward I., taking advantage of the discontentment, sent two of his generals, Aymer de Valance and Sir John Pseworth or Siward (son of the Earl of March), to ravage Fifeshire. Being advertised of this, the Scottish Guardian immediately set out in pursuit, and, by a rapid march, overtook the Southron marauders near the castle of Lindores which, along with the old fortress of Balgarvie, was in possession of the enemy. In the spacious and beautiful forest of Blackearnside—the old chroniclers erroneously call it Ironside—the two armies encountered one another on the 12th of June 1298. Under a leader whose terrible sword, "fit only for archangel to wield," wrought wholesale destruction at every blow, the Scots, ardent, heroic, desperate men, fought with a hyena-like fierceness, as only those can who struggle for friends and fatherland. Time after time the English knights charged against the Scottish ranks, but only to be entangled among the marshes and quagmires with which the district abounded. At the close of the day the Sassenachs retreated, leaving nearly two thousand killed and wounded behind them; while Wallace lost but few of his men and none of his officers. The gallant Sir John Graham and Duncan Balfour, Sheriff of Fife, were placed *hors-de-combat*. In the course of the same summer the English suffered three more defeats between Lindores and Perth.

According to Harry the Minstrel, Wallace next proceeded to St Andrews, and ousted the renegade Bishop Comyn from his office :—

> Upon the morn to Sanct Androwis they past;
> Out of the town that byschop turnèd fast.
> The King of Ingland had him hidder send,
> The rent at will he gave him in commend.

His kingis charge as then he durst not hald ;
A wrangwys Pope that tyrant micht be called.
Few fled with him, and gat away by sea ;
For all Scotland he wald nocht Wallace see.

The fortunes of war, however, are fickle and fluctuating. Next year the "dark-flowing Carron" was crimsoned with the blood of freemen, when vile-hearted treachery played its masterpiece and the fiends of Scotland, the sons of Envy, betrayed their country for the shield of a king. "O strange fatuity !" groans Abercromby. "O odious envy ! whence comes it that Scotsmen are thus overruled by thee ? Alas ! it is natural to most men to hate and depress one another, the best patriots especially, because the best : in this, like to Cain who envied Abel ; to Rachel, who hated Leah ; to Saul, who maltreated David ; and to the Scots, who would not suffer themselves to be blessed by their Wallace."

But to our purpose : on Falkirk's fatal field Duncan Macduff, Earl of Fife, along with many other noble and valiant men, met a soldier's doom. Simpson, however, in his History of the Stuarts, tells us that it was not the Earl himself, but his granduncle, who fell in this battle. The immediate result was that the castles of Scotland again fell into the hands of the usurpers, the kingdom of Fife in particular being devoted to destruction, in revenge for the gallant stand made by the vassals of Macduff on Carron's banks.

Some time after the disastrous and ignominious defeat at Falkirk, Wallace repaired to France with a company of faithful adherents. About Whitsunday, 1303, he returned, and, landing at Montrose—some say Dundee—determined to rescue his outraged country from the yoke of the oppressor, or fall in the glorious attempt. On learning that almost all the eastern shires were in the possession of Edward's generals, he marched with his small army through Fife, and was successful in recapturing several strongholds garrisoned by Englishmen. A party of the enemy had betaken themselves to Lochleven, on an island in which stood an old castle, the residence for many

centuries of the Pictish and Scottish sovereigns, and belonging latterly to the house of Douglas. Wallace made up his mind to dislodge them. At dead of night he slipt towards the lake, taking with him eighteen of his trustiest soldiers. Arrived at the shore he doffed his garments, fastened his sword about his neck, and swam sturdily across to the islet; there he cut the hawser of the English boat, brought it over, and conveyed his men in safety to the castle, which he assaulted and took, sparing none, as was his custom, except the women and children. Then he sent a message to Sir John Ramsay, requesting him to come over and partake of a dish of trout with him in the castle of Lochleven.

So far, so good; but what will preferments not do?—what will money not do?—what will envy not do? For English gold the noble hero was betrayed into his enemies' hands by Sir John Menteith, a man—nay, rather a fiend in human form, whose name is blackened with treachery and iniquity of the deepest dye. On Tower Hill, 23rd of August 1305, the brave knight of Ellerslie was beheaded. And who among us can venture to chastise, even holily, the chaplain of Wallace for his outburst of anathemas on the head of the traitor? "Accursed be the day," says that worthy man, "of John Menteith's nativity, and may his name be blotted out of the Book of Life! Accursed to all eternity be the inhuman tyrant who put him to death, whilst he, the noble champion of the Scots, shall, for the reward of his virtue, have glory without end!"

> His soul Death had not power to kill;
> His noble deeds the world do fill
> With lasting trophies of his name.

Before this happened, however, Fife was again visited by the puissant Longshanks himself. In the beginning of the summer of 1303 he crossed the Forth, and rampaged as far north as Elgin. Nothing was sacred to the war-fiend. Hither and thither he sped in a frenzy of malicious rage. "The torch," says Chalmers, "everywhere conducted him to his object:

devastation followed in his rear. He burnt the abbeys which supplied him with the most commodious lodgings; the Benedictine Abbey of Dunfermline, which could then have accommodated three sovereigns and their retinues within its ample precincts, was destroyed by the English when they no longer wanted its abundant hospitality."

At the western metropolis the Hammer of the Scots—*Le Marteau des Écossais*—as Edward loved to style himself, wintered and held his Christmas festivities. In its venerable abbey the Scottish Parliament had frequently assembled, to discuss, among other things, the suzerainty of England; and this was the reason probably why it fell a sacrifice to the rage of the invaders, whose writers palliate its destruction, as they do many similar acts of violence, by declaring that the Scots had converted the house of the Lord into a den of thieves by holding their rebellious Parliaments there.

BRUCE.

WALLACE.

The Christmas festivities over, Edward proceeded to St Andrews, where he stayed for about a month. There he convoked a great council of the barons of both countries to

settle the difficult task of subduing Scotland. By that ignoble assembly those chieftains who had defied the Lord Paramount —amongst them Sir William Wallace and Sir Simon Fraser, the lieutenant-general of the Scottish army—were outlawed. While in the ecclesiastical capital, too, he again displayed his brutal extravagance by tearing the leaden roof off the refectory of the monastery, to face the mangonels and other war-engines which were afterwards used at the siege of Stirling Castle. The furious old despot then quitted the land which he had so ruthlessly overrun and mangled, leaving the inhabitants to wonder when the withering blast would return again. Providence, however, stept in and decreed that never more would he set foot on Scottish soil.

And now the days speed on, and it is just six months after that never-to-be-forgotten tragedy on Tower Hill. On the shoulders of the Bruce has fallen the cloak of Wallace, and in his hand has been placed the sword of Freedom. On Palm Sunday, 1306, he was crowned. The coronation, so auspicious an event in itself, becomes all the more interesting to us when we remember that the courageous Isobel, Countess of Buchan, the noble consort of the renegade and ignoble Comyn, was the sister of the Earl of Fife, who at that time was a partisan of Edward I. By hereditary right it was the special privilege of the Macduffan family to place the crown on their sovereign's head, and when her vacillating brother scornfully refused the honour, it was this loyal lady who, amid the loud huzzas that burst from a thousand throats, crowned the Bruce with a golden hoop—the regalia having been carried away ten years before by the English Czar. For this intrepid deed the heroic Countess whom the prejudiced and one-sided Westminster characterises as *impiissima coniuratrix*—a most shameless conspirator, and the scurrilous Prynne calumniates as an infamous adulteress, was actually confined, by order of the irate tyrant, in an iron cage at Berwick, from which it is doubtful if she ever escaped.

Great was Edward's rage when he heard that Bruce had been crowned. Though in his dotage and shattered by infirmities, he at once set out for Scotland with a powerful army, and pushed the Earl of Pembroke on in front. Edward's generalissimo harried the eastern shires. For King Robert the castle of Cupar maintained a memorable siege. It was nobly defended by Bishop Wishart of Glasgow, a turbulent and versatile politician and prelate, who, like most of his colleagues, could wield the weapons of war when necessary. At last, however, Wishart was compelled to hand over the keys to Lord Aymer de Valance. On the capitulation of the citadel, the priest, who had doffed his sacerdotal stole for burnished armour, and laid aside his crosier for a drawn sword, was sent, arrayed in such ungodly garb and loaded with chains of iron, a prisoner to England.

The decrepit old king had in the meantime reached Carlisle, where he lay languishing on a bed of sickness. Though in a state of extreme weakness, he swore that he would never sheathe his sword until he had subdued the Scots. He flattered himself that he was growing better; he even offered up his horse-litter in the cathedral-church of Carlisle; then re-commenced his march, but was so weak that he had to be supported on his war-horse between two aides-de-camp. At Burgh-on-Sand he breathed his last—within sight of the country he hated so much and so well. Yet, ere he died, he made his son promise to carry his bones at the head of the army till Scotland was vanquished. The second Edward, happily, had none of his father's mettle and abilities, and soon returned home without having accomplished anything.

The change of kings was the turning-point in Bruce's career. Garrison after garrison surrendered itself into his hands, and at length Stirling Castle was the only great fortress that remained to be taken; and it, too, opened its gates the morning after the battle of Bannockburn. In that celebrated struggle Fife lost thousands of its inhabitants.

Dishonourably humbled as they were, the English did not give up all hopes of conquering Scotland. Weary of futilely warring with the Scots on land, Edward Caernarvon, son of the famous Hammer, next attempted to assail them by sea. During the absence of King Robert in Ireland, whither he had gone to support his brother Edward who, two years previously, had been elected ruler at Carrickfergus, Caernarvon rigged out a fleet of ships and sent it into the Forth with orders to harry the country on both shores. In the midst of their depredations the English anchored off Inverkeithing, where their landing was half-heartedly opposed by the Earl of Fife and Sir Michael Balfour, who had raised a force of five hundred soldiers in order to drive the marauders back to their ships.

Perceiving the odds he had to encounter, and being, besides, not over courageous himself, the Earl beat a precipitate retreat, when he encountered William Sinclair, the Bishop of Dunkeld, with some three-score armed men in his company. The loyal and martial prelate, having inquired whither they were flying, severely censured them for their craven-heartedness, exclaiming, "Shame, ye cowards; you deserve to have your gilt spurs hacked off!"—meaning, of course, that men like unto them were a stain upon the knightly priesthood. Then, throwing aside his prelatical garments, he seized a spear in his hand, and, putting spurs to his horse, cried, "Who loves Scotland, follow me!" A hundred lances were instantly couched,—he led them again to the charge, and, coming down upon the enemy before they had completed their disembarkation, attacked them so fiercely that several hundreds were slain at the first onset. The invaders gave way and escaped to their boats, but such was their hurry that one of them, being overburdened, sank ere they could pull to the men-of-war. When news of this exploit reached the ears of the King, he exclaimed, "Sinclair shall be my bishop!" and as the King's bishop was the gallant churchman ever afterwards honoured and remembered by his co-patriots.

Thus was Scotland delivered from the bondage under which it had groaned so long. A desultory warfare still continued for many years, but a zealous courage had been inspired by the Bruce into the hearts of his subjects, and the English were defeated on every side. Such indeed was their terror that, in the words of their own historians, "a hundred of them would have fled from two or three Scotsmen." At last Edward made overtures for peace, and in 1328 the English Parliament, at York, acknowledged the Independence of Scotland and renounced all claims of overlordship.

A year later Bruce died. But he left behind him a realm that was gloriously free. Peace had been concluded with England; treaties made with France and Norway; and the potentates of Europe, even the Pope, had owned the Scottish kingdom. Was it wonder, then, that the soul of Scotland rejoiced and was glad? Though their new king, David II., was but a child of five summers, yet in Regent Randolph Moray, Baron of Aberdour, Scotsmen found a man whose genius and wisdom in the administration of justice was only equalled by his own matchless valour and uncorrupted character.

For a year or two the sun shone over Scotland as it had never done before, and there was peace and plenty. But every sweet has its bitter. In 1332 the Good Regent died at Musselburgh, and was buried beside the remains of his illustrious uncle in Dunfermline Abbey. Barbour, the Brucian historiographer and a youthful contemporary of Randolph, asserts that he was poisoned at a feast held in his palace of Wemyss, by an English friar. Here is the rhyming chronicler's indisputable testimony:—

> The lave sa weill mantenyt he,
> And held in pess swa the countre,
> That it was nevir or his day
> Sa weill, as I herd auld men say:
> Bot syne, allace! pusonyt was he;
> To see his dede was gret pitè.

Andro of Wyntoun utters the same decisive affirmation :—

> Thai thocht to gere
> Him wyth wenenous fell poysoun
> Be destroyid, and fell tresoun,
> For at the Wemyss, by the se,
> Poysownyd at a fest wes he.

Troubles multitudinous now assailed the Scottish kingdom. The corpse of Randolph was not yet cold when Edward Baliol —son of John Baliol—claimed the crown. In pursuit of his pretensions he set sail from Ravenspar, near the mouth of the Humber, with a few thousand soldiers. Prosperous gales carried them northward, and on the 31st of July 1332, the English ships appeared before Burntisland, where, owing to the nature of the ground, had the Scots been in the least prepared for the storm that momently broke over them, the hazardous enterprise might easily have been nipped in the bud, and all Baliol's hopes of recovering his father's rankless and degraded sceptre made the sport of every wind. Mar, however, was faint-hearted and vacillating : with a large army he lay at a distance, and the opportunity to break the neck of the invasion flitted past before his very eyes.

As it was, a landing was effected. The conflicting accounts given of the expedition warn us to walk warily. While Mar remained inactive, Sir Alexander Seton and Duncan Macduff, Earl of Fife, swooped down upon the invaders with a handful of men, and a desperate encounter took place upon the edge of the cliffs. The Scots were thoroughly repulsed. and the brave Seton slain in the fray. With terribly immodest hyperbole, the English writers magnify to incredibility the successes of their countrymen, affirming that the little band of six hundred warriors disembarked in the face of ten thousand Scotsmen ; nay, killed nine hundred of them upon the spot, without losing —how many, themselves, they don't say. What disgusting braggadocio ! Certain it is, truly, they gained a glorious victory. Echard says that Baliol and his resolute adventurers,

to prevent all hopes of escape, sent back their vessels to sea, and, thus reduced to the necessity of fighting valiantly or dying cowardly, encountered their opposers with such vigour and magnanimity that they gave them a signal defeat and forced them to fly dishonourably, crying out as they fled, "The enemy are come! The enemy are come!"

Elated by this success, Baliol at once pushed on to the abbey of Dunfermline, where he found great stores of ammunition, particularly five hundred spears of fine oak, with long pikes of iron and steel, and a seasonable supply of provisions, laid up by the Regent Randolph, who had died only twelve days previously.

His army, meanwhile, had increased to quadruple the strength it possessed on its arrival, and so, feeling more confident and enthusiastic, Baliol hastened towards St John's Town, bidding his fleet circumnavigate the peninsula of Fife and anchor in the Firth of Tay. On the 12th of August he reached the historic banks of the river Earn, and found his progress barred by a powerful Scottish force, under the incapable and presumptive Mar, encamped on Dupplin Moor. By dawn of next day a most ignominious defeat had befallen the Scottish arms. It could not be called a battle: no, not even a rout, but rather a carnage. Ill-fated intemperance on the part of the native soldiers, and the abominable treachery of a recreant nobility, combined with the military incapacity of the Regent, provoked an overthrow which was as disgraceful as it was disastrous.

"Rushing down," says Tytler, "at the head of his army, without order or discipline, the immense mass of soldiers became huddled and pressed together; spearmen, bowmen, horses, and infantry were confounded in a heap, which bore headlong down upon the English, and in an instant overwhelmed young Randolph Moray and his little phalanx. The confusion became inextricable: multitudes of the Scottish soldiers were suffocated or trodden down by their own men; and the English, preserving their discipline, and under brave and experienced leaders, made

a pitiless onslaught. . . . . Multitudes perished without stroke of weapon, overridden by their own cavalry, suffocated by the pressure and weight of their armour, or trod under foot by the fury with which the rear ranks had pressed upon the front. On one part of the ground the dead bodies lay so thick that the mass of the slain was a spear's length in depth."

Terrible indeed was the butchery—so terrible, in fact, that, though disrobed of the exaggeration with which English authors have arrayed it, it will ever rank as one of the most calamitous reverses in the annals of our country. The Regent himself and the flower of Scottish chivalry were slain, and multitudes, through treachery as well as in despair, humbly submitted to the conqueror. Duncan, Earl of Fife, was taken prisoner, after making a gallant stand, in which fell nearly four hundred men-at-arms who fought under his banner.

Perth straightway surrendered; and Baliol, after being crowned king at Scone, where he received the oath of allegiance from the gentry of Fife, Gowrie, and Strathearn, marched with his army through the country, leaving the captured citadel to the care of Earl Duncan. Before he returned, however, Perth had been stormed and retaken by the Scots under Sir Simon Fraser and Sir Robert Keith; Fife and his wife and children sent to the Castle of Kildrummie to think over their inconstancy and shiftiness; and the town delivered into the safe keeping of Sir John Lindsay. Nor did Baliol enjoy his honours long. Suddenly attacked in Annandale by Randolph Moray at the head of a band of determined patriots, he was chased, almost naked, upon a bridleless horse, across the Border: so once more he had perforce to cast himself upon the charity of England's avaricious and treacherous monarch.

The battle of Halidon Hill, however, reinstated him. Again he was master of the kingdom, and again he placed Sassenach garrisons in all the principal fortresses. And thus, within a remarkably short time, Scotland had, as it were, lost nearly forty years: the retrogression more than counterbalanced the

advancement it had made during that period: it seemed really to stand just where Wallace found it when he rose in all his majesty to break the bonds of the usurpers.

After the disastrous conflict at Halidon Hill in 1334, only five strongholds held out for King David. One of these was Lochleven Castle, which, under Governor Alan Vipont, successfully resisted all the attacks of Sir John de Strivelin and his troops. During the following month the Scottish Estates assembled in the consequential castle of Dairsie, under the presidency of Robert the Steward and Sir Andrew Moray, the governors of the kingdom. Much was expected to accrue from

DAIRSIE CASTLE.

this Parliament for the freedom of Scotland: nothing, however, was done. Bitter dissensions among the nobles, who eyed with suspicion and distrust the presence of the self-seeking and turncoat Comyn, Earl of Athole, with a large retinue of his followers, embroiled the deliberations before any definite plan of defence could be arrived at.

A year later the English monarch himself rushed up and down the country. He visited Perth. It was unfortified,—he caused it to be fenced with walls and bulwarks, and made the abbeys of Cupar, Arbroath, Lindores, Balmerino, Dunfermline, and St

Andrews pay for the doing of it. Assuredly he was exercising his overlordship with a mighty hand! Henry Beaumont he appointed governor of St Andrews, and Henry Ferrier captain of the castle of Leuchars. On the 5th of October he was at Falkland which was also in the hands of the English, and then he went home, leaving garrisons in many of the strongholds, and Baliol, the puppet-king, in possession of the throne.

And just as when the cat is from home the mice come out to sport and play, so the Scots who, while the English tiger was harrying the country, had retired to the woods and morasses, now emerged from their hiding-places. With Edward's departure rose the Scottish star in brilliancy and glory. Month by month the government gained strength. The guardian, Sir Andrew Moray, the pupil of Wallace and a veteran of sterling abilities and unapproachable integrity, stormed through the eastern shires, here and there inflicting terrible defeats on the southron soldiery. Leuchars Castle yielded to him on the spot; St Andrews and the tower of Falkland followed its example, and were, to prevent them again becoming strongholds to the oppressors, destroyed and dismantled. From the highest pinnacle of the Macduffan castle on Cupar Hill there still flaunted, however, the banner of the usurper.

The castle of Cupar, remarks Lord Hailes, was defended by William Bullock, an ecclesiastic of eminent abilities, whom Baliol had appointed chamberlain of Scotland. This able, sagacious, and valiant churchman for a long time successfully resisted the arms of Moray the Regent, the intrepid assertor of his nation's rights after Wallace's death. But the art of Robert the Steward succeeded where the bravery of Moray had failed. Sounding Bullock, he discovered him to be selfish and avaricious; and, satiating his predominant passion by an ample grant of lands, won him over from his duty. Bullock abandoned and betrayed his benefactor, yielded up the fortress committed to his care, and, with his numerous adherents, swore fealty to David. Men in all ages have rewarded treason: but

in that age men were wont to put confidence in traitors. Bullock was received into as great trust with the Scots as he had ever enjoyed under Baliol; and he seems to have acted with zeal and fidelity in support of that cause which he had so dishonourably espoused.

The fall of Cupar occurred towards the close of 1339 A.D. Soldierly qualities like those of the double-hearted prelate were invaluable to the noble band of patriots. Through his endeavours Perth was wrested out of the enemy's hands, just when the Scots were on the eve of raising the siege; and the possession of Edinburgh Castle, soon after, was all owing to the clear-headedness and strategic propensities of the warlike Bullock. Yet the fate of this intriguing and renegade churchman was horrible in the extreme. Suspected of trafficking with the English, he was shorn of his honours, thrown by Sir David Barclay into the dungeons of Lochindorb in Moray, and there slowly starved to death.

Such is a meagre outline of the perilous condition of the Kingdom during the long years which preceded and followed what is known in *English* history as the Independence of Scotland. Not that Scotland was ever anything else than free: not that, but she was so overburdened by wars within and wars without, that she neither reaped nor enjoyed those pleasures and advantages which are the inheritance of a country absolutely free and independent. Enmity—cold-blooded, back-biting, persevering, unappeasable enmity on the part of the Comyn family towards the Brucian, coupled with the intriguing hostility of the Plantagenet sovereigns of England and the treachery of the disinherited barons, created the most violent heart-burnings among the Scottish nobility—heart-burnings which were, as we have seen, only stamped out, after great difficulty, by wise and able Regents.

Auld Robin Gray.

ON the rising ground behind the baronial town of Colinsburgh stands Balcarres, a stately old edifice of the Gothic style, amid beautiful terraces which are shrouded with every conceivable garland of loveliness, and over which are wafted the deliciously soft breezes of the Firth of Forth.

It is a glorious pile—the seat of the Lindsays, descendants of De Limesay, an ancient and honourable family which came originally from Normandy. The first of the line in Scotland appears to have been Sir Walter de Lindesay, a baron under David I., in the beginning of the twelfth century. In the course of time the family became divided into many branches: and the Crawfords and Lindsays and Balcarresses—sections of it—have played, as a clan, the lion's part in the formation of our country's history.

Balcarres, then, is the seat of our story. The date of it refers to the spring of the year 1772. In a little room of the old mansion, reached only by long flights of winding stairs, and commanding a view of magnificent beauty and extent—of sea and lake, and rock and beach—sits the eldest daughter of Balcarres, Lady Anne Lindsay, making for herself what she calls "artificial happiness," to wile away the time which has crawled by slowfootedly indeed since her sister Margaret's marriage and consequent departure to London.

A pen is in the maiden's hand, and envelopes and scraps of envelopes of old letters lie littered about her, for Lady Anne is spinning from the brain snatches of poetry and prose, "leaving

it to posterity to value the webs or not as it pleases." Lonely she feels and pensive, thinking sadly of the beautiful days of the past, those happy days of girlhood when life's pathway seemed strewn with the brightest flowers. She remembers her girlish pranks—she is little more than a girlish nymph even yet—remembers how Robin Gray, the aged herd of Balcarres, had gone one day to the Countess, her mother, with the astounding intelligence—"The young gentlemen, and the young ladies, and all the dogs are run away, my lady!"—and how she, being the eldest, and therefore the most guilty of the criminals, had the biggest penance to perform.

Memories of that sweet, happy May-time crowd around her, for between her and her sister there had always existed "unusually warm feelings of sisterly affection." And so, in an idle hour, having no other source of entertainment save poetizing, she inscribed for endless generations the delightful and universally popular ballad of "Auld Robin Gray."

Oh, tender-hearted daughter of a hundred Earls, what tongue is fit to sound thy praises? Thy country owes thee more than lips can ever tell, for thou hast bequeathed to it and the world at large a song which, containing as it does the essence of a million love-tales, shall be admired and adored while men and women walk this earth and feel the pangs of Cupid's darts!

Like Sir David Wilkie, who stands unrivalled in his own particular sphere of painting, so Lady Anne Lindsay occupies a foremost place among the lady poets of this country, or of any other country, as a ballad writer. She is the word-painter of the plebeian joys and sorrows. Wilkie committed rural scenes and incidents with a loyal brush to canvas; Lady Lindsay gives us an inimitable "speaking-picture" of them—a picture so exquisitely simple and pure, so full of the profoundest pathos, and of such intensity of feeling and thought, that the Minstrel of Tweedside says it is "worth all the dialogues Corydon and Phyllis have had together from the days of Theocritus downwards," while Ritson, a critic of dread and drastic severity

—the more acceptable on that account as an authority—bestows on it the highest eulogy he possibly can, declaring that this species of Scottish song-composition has been carried (in *Auld Robin Gray)* to such perfection that it must either cease or degenerate. This, from a pen so reprehensive, is well-earned praise indeed.

Had Lady Anne penned nothing else than this charming ballad her name would still be a household word wherever the Scottish tongue is heard and sung, for its grandly pathetic air makes many a listener "dry up the tearfu' e'e."

The poem tells its story with delightful simplicity. It is essentially pastoral, but not the pastoral poetry of the Cockney, nor the pastoral poetry of "the grass," replete with a refinement that is altogether absurd and unnatural. It is neither of these, but a plaintively sublime and pleasing description of rural life, a sort of beatification of true poverty and love. It is romantic, in that it is pervaded with an extraordinary display of genuine virtue and affection. Lady Lindsay's mind had a cordial sympathy for whatever tended to elevate her fellow-creatures, and she throws into the word-picture all the majesty of heart-rending sorrow—a sorrow here "so grand and terrible and sublime and holy." Jeanie's nature she paints simply, yet with all the colouring its grandeur and sublimity can lay claim to. What a devotion, too, is that of the spotless village heroine, represented as discharging her domestic duties and softening the cares of human existence, as sympathizing with, while the hands toil to supply the staff of life for the suffering parents—that spirit of universal humanity which honours and adorns all who possess it!

There are many versions of the ballad, due, doubtless, to the mystery which for many years hung over its authorship, and allowed varying transcriptions of it to be made during the lifetime of the composer. The poem is seldom, if ever, sung in full, the first stanza being, for musical purposes, invariably omitted. It is here, however, submitted

in its entirety, for it is one of the choicest beauties in the Scottish language.

When the sheep are in the fauld, and the kye's come hame,
When a' the weary world to rest is gane,
The waes o' my heart fa' in showers frae my e'e,
Unkent by my gudeman wha sleeps soundly by me.

. . . . . .

Young Jamie lo'ed me weel, and sought me for his bride,
But, saving a crown, he had naething else beside ;
To mak' the crown a pound my Jamie gaed to sea,
And the crown and the pound were baith for me.

He hadna been gane a week but only twa,
When my father brake his arm, and our cow was stown awa' ;
My mither she fell sick, my Jamie was at sea,
And Auld Robin Gray cam' a-courting to me.

My father couldna work—my mither couldna spin—
I toiled night and day, but their bread I couldna win ;
Auld Robin fed them baith, and, wi' tears in his e'e,
Said, "Jeanie, for their sakes, will ye no marry me?"

My heart it said, "Na!" for I looked for Jamie back ;
But the wind it blew hard, and his ship was a wrack ;
His ship it was a wrack—why didna Jamie dee?
Or why was I spared to cry, "Wae is me?"

My father urged me sair, my mither didna speak,
But she looked i' my face till my heart was like to break ;
They gie'd him my hand, though my heart was at the sea—
And Auld Robin Gray was gudeman to me!

I hadna been his wife a week but only four,
When, mournfu' as I sat on the stane at my door,
I saw my Jamie's ghaist, for I couldna think it he,
Till he said, "I'm come hame, love, to marry thee!"

Oh! sair did we greet, and mickle say o a',—
I gie'd him a'e kiss, and bade him gang awa' ;
I wish that I were dead, but I am na like to dee,
For, though my heart is broken, I'm but young, wae is me!

I gang like a ghaist, and I carena much to spin,
I darena think o' Jamie, for that wad be a sin ;
But I will do my best a gude wife aye to be,
For Auld Robin Gray—he is kind, kind to me !

For a long time the ballad was sung to an ancient Scottish melody called "The Bridegroom greets when the Sun gaes doon"—a beautiful and pleasing air of which Lady Anne was passionately fond, and which used to be rehearsed at Balcarres by Sophy Johnstone, an old and eccentric friend of the family, described by the authoress as a droll, ingenious fellow, who could shoe a horse more quickly than the smith, who made excellent trunks, played well on the fiddle, sung a man's song in a bass voice, and was by many people suspected of being one—an original being, in the making of whom Nature seemed to have hesitated to the last whether to make her a boy or a girl. But the words warbled by this jockey-coated, strong-voiced woman whom Sir Walter Scott seldom thought of without smiling, were somewhat indelicate, and Lady Lindsay determined to supplant them with something more suitable. The outcome was, as we have seen, the charming ballad before us, written when the authoress was "a pretty, witty, and vivacious young lady" of only one-and-twenty summers.

To the Rev. William Reeves, rector of Wrington, in Somersetshire, musical devotees owe boundless gratitude for the splendid melody to which the ballad is nowadays so universally sung.

From one honest gentleman Lady Anne says she received an excellent hint. The laird of Dalzell, after hearing her sing it, broke out into the angry exclamation—"Oh, the villain ! oh, the auld rascal ! I ken wha stealt the poor lassie's coo—it was Auld Robin Gray himsel' !"

The idea was treasured up, the result being the second part of the poem, which was written to gratify Lady Anne's aged mother, who wished to know "how the unlucky business of Jeanie and Jamie ended." But it was a fatal mistake—as

sequels generally are—in that it destroyed the true nobility of its characters, and incriminated the kindly old herd of Balcarres, who, "thankfu' to dee," slips conveniently into another and brighter world. Luckily, however, Robin Gray *secundus* never became popular, though some of the verses are really beautiful and not unworthy of the authoress, who was quite conscious of its comparative inferiority as a whole, and declared that "the loves and distresses of youth go more to the heart than the contritions, confessions, and legacies of old age." One seldom comes across the continuation in print, but, in order to show how "the unlucky business" did end, it is given here.

The spring had pass'd ower, 'twas summer nae mair,
And, trembling, were scatter'd the leaves in the air;
"Oh! winter," cried Jeanie, "we kindly agree,
For wae looks the sun when he shines upon me."

Nae langer she wept, her tears were a' spent;
Despair it was come, and she thought it content—
She thought it content, but her cheek was grown pale,
And she droop'd like a snawdrap broke down by the hail.

Her father was sad, and her mither was wae,
But silent and thoughtfu' was Auld Robin Gray;
He wandered his lane, and his face was as lean
As the side o' a brae where the torrents hae been.

He gaed to his bed, but nae physic wad take,
And often he said—"It is best for her sake!"
While Jeanie supported his head as he lay,
And tears trickled down upon Auld Robin Gray.

"Oh! greet nae mair, Jeanie," said he, wi' a groan,
"I'm na worth your sorrow—the truth maun be known;
Send round for the neighbours, my hour it draws near,
And I've that to tell that it's fit a' should hear.

"I've wranged her," he said, "but I kent it ower late,—
I've wranged her, and sorrow is speeding my date;
But a's for the best, since my death will soon free
A faithfu' young heart that was ill matched wi' me.

"I lo'ed and I courted her mony a day,
The auld folks were for me, but still she said nay;
I kentna o' Jamie, nor yet o' her vow;—
In mercy forgi'e me—'twas I stole the cow!

"I caredna for crummie, I thought but o' thee—
I thought it was crummie stood 'twixt you and me;
While she fed your parents, oh! did you no say
You never would marry wi' Auld Robin Gray?

"But sickness at hame, and want at the door—
You gied me your hand, while your heart it was sore;
I saw it was sore,—why took I your hand?
Oh! that was a deed to my shame o'er the land!

"How truth, soon or late, comes to open daylight!
For Jamie cam' back, and your cheek it grew white,—
White, white grew your cheek, but aye true unto me—
Oh! Jeanie, I'm thankfu'—I'm thankfu' to dee!

"Is Jamie come here yet?" and Jamie he saw—
"I've injured you sair, lad, so leave you my a';
Be kind to my Jeanie, and soon may it be!
Waste nae time, my dauties, in mourning for me."

They kissed his cauld hands, and a smile o'er his face
Seemed hopefu' of being accepted by grace;
"Oh! doubtna," said Jamie, "forgi'en he will be—
Wha wadna be tempted, my love, to win thee?"

. . . . . .

The first days were dowie, while time slipt awa',
But saddest and sairest to Jeanie o' a'
Was thinkin' she couldna be honest and right,
Wi' tears in her e'e, while her heart was sae light.

But nae guile had she, and her sorrow away,
The wife o' her Jamie, the tear couldna stay;
A bonnie wee bairn—the auld folks by the fire—
Oh, now she has a' that her heart can desire.

Half a century passed away, yet the years only served to deepen the mystery which had so long hung over its authorship.

During that time *littérateurs* had never ceased to ask of one another the engrossing question—"Who wrote the ballad?" But so carefully guarded was the secret that, beyond a few very intimate friends, none knew for certain the name of the unknown writer, albeit twenty guineas were offered to whoever should clear away the darkness.

It was not, however, until the year 1823, when Lady Anne wrote to the author of "Waverley," transmitting to him, fairly and frankly, the Origin, Birth, Life, Death, and Confession, Will and Testament of "Auld Robin Gray," that the clouds were dispelled. Amongst other things the authoress in her memorable letter says:—

"Robin Gray, so called from its being the name of the old herdsman at Balcarres, was *born* soon after the close of the year 1771. My sister, Margaret, had married and accompanied her husband to London; I was melancholy, and endeavoured to amuse myself by attempting a few poetical trifles. There was an ancient Scotch melody, of which I was passionately fond; Sophy Johnstone, who lived before your day, used to sing it to us at Balcarres. She did not object to its having improper words; but I did. I longed to sing old Sophy's air to different words, and give to its plaintive tones some little history of virtuous distress in humble life such as might suit it. While attempting to effect this in my closet, I called to my little sister, now Lady Hardwicke, who was the only person near me, 'I have been writing a ballad, my dear; I am oppressing my heroine with many misfortunes; I have already sent her Jamie to sea, and broken her father's arm, and made her mother fall sick, and given her Auld Robin Gray for her lover; but I wish to load her with a fifth sorrow within the four lines, poor thing! Help me to one!' 'Steal the cow, sister Anne,' said the little Elizabeth. The cow was immediately *lifted* by me ('stown awa',' the ballad tells us, by Jeanie's aged sweetheart), and the song completed. At our fireside and amongst our neighbours 'Auld Robin Gray' was always called for. I was pleased in

secret with the appreciation it met with; but such was my dread of being suspected of writing anything, perceiving the shyness it created in those who could write nothing, that I carefully kept my own secret. . . . It proved its popularity from the highest to the lowest, and gave me pleasure, while I hugged myself in obscurity."

Lady Anne wrote other poems which were to have been published in a volume, entitled "Lays of the Lindsays," but a peculiar indecision of character prevailed—her "Vagrant Scraps" of poesy became vagrants indeed, and the world is to-day the poorer for their want.

Though not possessing the rich golden hair and the "heavenly blue" eyes so characteristic of the Norman race from which she sprung, Lady Lindsay was still a graceful and animated woman, —the charming Lady Anne of her friends and kinsfolk, brimful of good humour and wit, and the Sister Anne of the Prince Regent himself. Born in November 1750, the noontide of her life had passed ere she gave her heart and hand to Sir Andrew Barnard, son of the Bishop of Limerick, a man not blest with a superabundance of this world's gear, but a handsome and highly-gifted gentleman for all that. The union seems to have been most satisfactory, for in her interesting letters she writes that they "were truly grateful for all the blessings conferred on them, but more so for their happiness in each other."

In 1797, while the French Revolution was raging, Lady Barnard accompanied her husband to the Cape of Good Hope, whither he journeyed as Colonial Secretary to Governor Macartney. Then were written those simple yet vivacious accounts of cross-country expeditions in the colony, where Lady Anne became once more a child of nature, and lived her old Balcarres days over again. And when Death came to claim her in 1825, after a widowhood of eighteen years spent in the friendship of Burke, Sheridan, Dundas, and Wyndham, and a host of men and women wise and good, he found a woman "serene, placid, and contented" in her old age.

As a prose writer, Lady Barnard is graphic and natural; as a biographer, candid and humorous, yet much given up to a family biographer's faults; while her fame rests on "Auld Robin Gray." It is her monument—a monument so grand and noble, that Scott, when he enumerates the Hon. Mrs Murray's *Heart's Light*, Miss Elliot's *I have heard a lilting*, Mrs Cockburn's *Fortune Beguiling*, and Lady Wardlaw's glorious old ballad of *Hardyknute*, says—"Place *Auld Robin* at the head of this list, and I question if we masculine wretches can claim five or six songs equal in pathos and elegance out of the long array of Scottish minstrelsy."

> Happy she lived, for happy is the mind
> That still through kindest medium views mankind.

St Rule and the Culdees.

Stretched in the sunny light of victory bask
The Host that followed Urien as he strode
O'er heaps of slain.
From wood and moss
Druids descend, auxiliars of the cross—
Rush on the fight, to harps preferring swords
And everlasting deeds to burning words!
But Heaven's high will
Permits a second and darker shade
Of Pagan night. Afflicted and dismayed,
The relics of the sword flee to the mountains;
O wretched land!
But
Who comes with functions apostolical?
Mark him!—of shoulders curved and stature tall,
Black hair, and vivid eye, and meagre cheek,
His prominent feature like an eagle's beak;
A man whose aspect doth at once appal
And strike with reverence.

—*Wordsworth.*

TO a pedigree-loving nation like ours—a nation whose very name spells antiquity and mystery—traditional stories of old-world times are always glamorously fascinating. Just such a tale is the legend of St Rule, about which there may be, as indeed there seem to be, scintillations of truth, despite the fact that it is monkish, and overshadowed by the misty cobwebs of a very distant and darkish antepast.

Many hundreds of years ago, say the monastic writers, there

lived in the city of Patras, on the Grecian shores, a man of God called Regulus. Something like three centuries had elapsed since the Apostle Andrew had suffered martyrdom by crucifixion, and his remains, after being enshrined, had been entrusted to the care of the Achaian monk. One night an angel appeared to him in a vision, and, pointing to the sacred reliquary, commanded him to take from thence an arm-bone, three of the fingers of the right hand, and three toes, and carry them carefully to a distant island in the great Western Sea. At first the saint hesitated to attend to the mysterious mandate, and was again told to trust himself to the ocean till he should arrive at some unknown haven in the island of Albion. Resolved on rendering immediate obedience, Regulus

> Hoisted sails, and, with his chosen few,
> Bade to his native plains a last adieu,

after procuring from the shrine of the apostle the necessary relics. He took with him upon the hazardous voyage fourteen companions—Damianus, a presbyter; two deacons—Gelasius and Cubaculus by name; eight hermits, and three pious virgins or nuns.

Fair winds bore them away westward—past Malta, of sacred memory to the heroic crew, alongside the shores of Africa, through the Straits of Gibraltar into the wild, restless Atlantic, round the rugged coasts of Spain and France, and up the English Channel into the German Ocean, till, after a tempestuous voyage of two years, their ship was dashed to pieces upon the rocks of St Andrews Bay, and they themselves cast ashore, losing everything save the relics of St Andrew which were miraculously preserved.

"The date assigned to Regulus's arrival is 29th October, 370 A.D. The propriety of his setting sail at the very period when he committed his barge to the ocean has been pointed out with becoming gravity and minuteness. Had he been three days later in seeking for the relics at the shrine of Patras, they had

been removed by the Emperor Constantine, who then visited the city, to carry away the remains of the apostle to Constantinople."

On the unconscious shore to which Providence had led them, an ocean-cave was displayed, as if by magic, to their wondering eyes. In this rugged, weather-beaten excavation, almost under the shadow of St Regulus' Tower, they found shelter, and here

> **Good St Rule his holy lay,**
> **From midnight to the dawn of day,**
> **Sang to the billows' sound.**

And at early dawn, and when the twilight glimmered away and was lost in the embrace of shadowy eventide—"the propitious hour" for frail mortality—the pensive votaries repaired to their rocky, shell-roofed penance-cell, where their tortured souls, wearied with the world's carking cares, hungered after goodness and grace, and their anguish melted as peace spread her covering wings over their aching, restless spirits.

"Originally consisting of two cells or apartments connected with each other, this historic cavern has suffered much from destructive hands during recent years, the crumbling nature of the rock rendering this all the more easy. Thirty years ago traces of some kind of stone altar were still visible, but nowadays the most imaginative would scarcely attempt to point the situation of this holy shrine, so much has the rock been defaced and broken away." Within the craggy bosom of the cavern Lady Buchan was wont to enjoy herself, towards the close of last century, by giving summer tea-parties, from which circumstance it has since been called Lady Buchan's cave.

It was a haggard, heathen land, infested with wild beasts and wilder men, to which Regulus and his comrades had been divinely sent. But as "fishers of men" who had bent on indurated knees before high Heaven's gracious throne, they were neither troubled nor dismayed. A rich harvest awaited them, and they were eager for the gleaning. Before them stretched a

wild, tempestuous ocean of ignorance and superstition, of darkness and disorder; but that rugged heathendom, where bloodshed, rapine, and clan feuds raged unceasingly and unmolested, and Druid priests and kinglet chiefs made the task the harder, they set themselves to reclaim from the dark, wintry night which enveloped it. Their oft-repeated but gladsome words, breathing peace and giving comfort, struck home in the hearts of the barbarous throng.

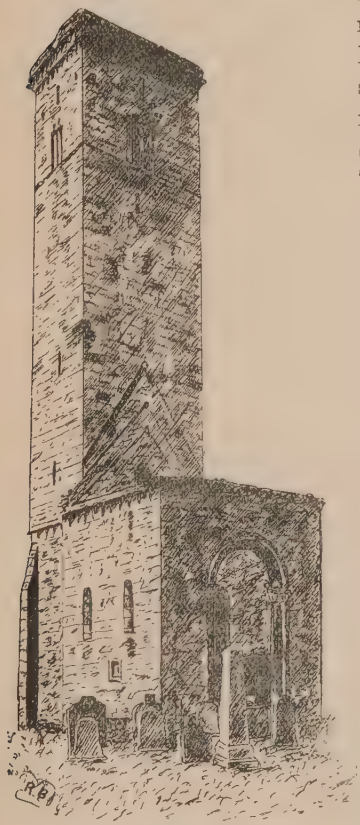
Very soon the news is wafted far and wide that a company of holy men and maidens have been stranded on the Horestian coasts, and are publishing abroad some mysterious doctrine, which, if not seen to at once, is likely to entirely metamorphose the religion of Pictland. By and by it reaches the ears of the king. Hergust was his name. His curiosity is aroused,—he must see these holy people for himself, must hear this unknown doctrine which his subjects are speaking so much about, for he is "a man of superior sagacity, and of an amiable and benevolent disposition." And so he visits the strangers in their grotto at Muckross, which was the name of the place where they had been shipwrecked, is struck with the priestly appearance of St Rule, and drinks eagerly in the words which fall from his sacred lips.

> The monarch leans
> Towards the pure truths this Delegate propounds;
> Repeatedly his own deep mind he sounds
> With careful hesitation—then convenes
> A synod of his counsellors.

No doubt the Pictish sovereign remembered having heard something of the new doctrine before; no doubt he had heard it, for Christianity was introduced into England as early as the end of the second century, and it was no uncommon thing for even our heathen kings to be schooled and tutored amongst their southern neighbours.

Before venturing further, let us understand that we are standing on debatable ground. There be many who date the introduction of Christianity into Scotland with the coming of St

Columba and his disciples to Iona in 563 A.D., and consider the whole story of St Rule but an empty, idle forgery, because it emanated from the cloisters, which were looked upon as perfect store-rooms of fables. That may be so, but these same cloisters have furnished us with all, or nearly all, our ancient history. Moreover, viewing the whole story as fictitious, how happens it that there are in the city of St Andrews a St Regulus' Tower, a St Regulus' Chapel, and a St Regulus' Cave? We can understand how the town might come to be called by its present-day name,—from the St Andrew monks of Hexham Abbey; but it would be hard indeed to disbelieve the presence of St Rule in Scotland at all. And granting that Regulus did not come at the time the monastic writers assert, whence did he come? Who was he? and when did he live?



ST REGULUS' TOWER.

Grant me permission to allow Principal Shairp to answer these questions. "The earliest sacred place on this wind-swept, foam-fringed promontory was the cave in the sandstone cliff,—it is now so crumbled away as to be almost indiscernible. But thither, probably soon after A.D. 600, came a Columban eremite, and made the cave his abode; and this

was, it is suggested, the historic personage who was afterwards transformed into the mythic Regulus. Hard by, there probably soon arose one of those primitive monasteries of wicker-work, in which would dwell a small brotherhood of Columban monks from Iona."

Here, however, there are too many probabilities—too many assumptions. The learned writer does not deny the presence of St Rule,—he even gives credit to the relics being brought thither; but as to whence they came he will not hazard an opinion. It might be from Patras or Constantinople. But the strange thing is that Shairp, while he urges us to "dismiss the groundless belief that the Culdees were Columbites," speaks of Columban monks living at St Andrews at the close of the ninth century, and then says that "Constantine, one of the Scottish kings, worn out with age and troubles, retired to the monastery of St Andrews in A.D. 942, living there as a Culdee till he died in that 'dreary pile'—the pile being the Culdee monastery of Kirkheugh,"—the sum and substance of which is that the Culdees did not amalgamate with the Columbites, but became so numerous and powerful that they set up for themselves a monastery which, within the short space of half a century, became a dreary pile!

Before bidding adieu to a subject so enticing yet so debatable as the coming of St Rule, consider for a moment the Tower which bears his name. Architectural authorities, even the best of them, give it only a conjectural date. Robertson, the antiquary, believes it was built about A.D. 1127, its insignificant proportions being the result of the impecuniosity of the founder, Bishop Robert, and its object the overshadowing of the humble Culdee monastery on the Kirk Hill, which had succeeded the small wattle-built huts of the primitive missionaries.

Believe this, and Regulus must have been a Romish monk;—had he been other, it is beyond the limits of credibility that Bishop Robert or any succeeding bishop would have cared to dedicate such an edifice to one belonging to a party which was

dwindling bit by bit, and being shorn of its rights and lands by Roman clerics and monks. Were this the case, too, we should have something very definite indeed regarding the saint—something certainly as substantial as the legendary tale which proclaims his arrival. The truth is, however, that Regulus was neither a Columbite nor a Romish monk, but a Culdee out-and-out. And now, only another word in support of this claim. Was Servanus, the Christian law-teacher of Culross, a Columbite? And the gentle-hearted, sweet-voiced, prince-born Kentigern—the white-haired Kentigern who met the great saint of Iona on the banks of the Molendinar Burn, "their coming together being an occasion of great joy,"—was he a Columbite? Were not both of them well-known men of God before Columba ever set foot on Scottish soil?

"The Tower of St Regulus," says Dr Rogers in his admirable work on St Andrews, "is one hundred and eight feet high, and the side of its base, within the walls, is twenty feet. It is built of neatly hewn stones of a most durable nature,—where the stones were procured remains undiscovered. It is probable that they were brought from a distance, as no stone can be found for many miles round the city of exactly similar colour and hardness; and the crevices between them are so thoroughly and powerfully cemented with lime that it bids fair to survive every building, ancient and modern, in the city. On the east side of the Tower still remain the walls of the chapel with which it was connected, and from three different ranges of marking or raggling on the Tower it would seem that the Chapel must have been provided with three different roofs, either given to it at three different eras, or placed on it at its erection, so as completely to secure the holy inmates from the severity of the storm.

When and by whom it was erected are questions which will remain for ever unsettled; and the uncertain guide of tradition or even conjecture can alone be the means by which the antiquary or historian can arrive at any account of its origin. If the legend be correct, the date of the foundation must be

assigned to the latter part of the fourth century, which would make it one of the most ancient buildings in the kingdom. Many antiquaries, however, have given it a much later date, but the greater number agree in assigning its origin to a period prior to the ninth century, owing to the entire absence of any portion of Gothic architecture, which is understood to have been adopted in this country about that era. And if the Chapel and Tower bear marks of being erected at so remote a period as the ninth century, we may have less hesitation in giving credit to the story of the erection at a still more distant date."

According to accounts, Hergust became one of the earliest proselytes. He cradled and nursed the new religion, granted to the monk and his comrades who had come without scrip and without the wherewithal to procure their daily sustenance, sandaled and single-coated, extensive lands for their annual revenue, and erected an edifice for their worship—this chapel of St Rule.

Change of religion meant a change in the names of places. Before Regulus's arrival the eastern part of Fife was designated Muckross—the Peninsula of Swine, for it was a favourite resort of these wild animals; by Hergust, out of regard for his religious instructor, it was altered to Kilrymont—the *Cella regis in monte* of Buchanan, signifying the Church on the King's Mount, *kil* being the common Celtic prefix for a church of these early religionists.

Later monarchs, too, became their benefactors. From King Hungus, in recognition of his memorable victory over the Northumbrians at Athelstaneford, near Haddington, when, in a moment of extremest peril, he earnestly implored the assistance of St Andrew, they received a tenth of that king's dominions—"all the lands lying betwixt the seas Ishundenema and Slethruma, and bounded by a line extending from Largo by Ceres to Hyrhat-nachtan Machchrill, now called Had Nachtan. And the king gave this district of Kilrymont to God and St Andrew, His apostle, with its waters, meadows, fields,

pastures, moors, and woods, in a perpetual almsgift, with this peculiar privilege, that its inhabitants should be exempted from levies, the building of castles and bridges, and all taxes imposed by the State. In confirmation thereof the king, in presence of his nobles, brought a turf cut from that land and laid it on the altar of St Andrew."

Principal Shairp has graphically described the scene in the poetical effusion which he writes commemorating the visit of Robert the Bruce to St Andrews Cathedral on July 5th, 1318. He says :—

This sacred soil hath felt the beat,
Age by age, of kingly feet,
Hither come for prayer and vow ;
But of all none great as thou,
Since the day thy great forbear,
Pictish Angus, did appear
O'er yon hill-top—at the head
Of his warriors, vision-led,
Holy Rule to duly greet,
Refuged in his cave-retreat.

. . . . .

Fair that dawn for Scotland, when
Met the priests and warrior-men,
Peace-attired. In forefront there,
With his feet and head all bare,
Moved St Rule, and high in air
Relics of the Apostle held ;
Following him, gray men of eld,
Came the monks, their anthems singing,
With the white-robed children flinging
Up to heaven their choral chant,
Most sweet-voiced and jubilant ;
Then barefoot, the King, his proud
War-gear cast aside and bowed
Low in reverence—last the throng
Of his warriors brave and strong,
Men of battle, moved along :

Seven times from east to west,
Compass'd they the soil they bless'd,
Making all the headlands o'er,
Free to heaven for evermore.

From Boethius, too, we learn that Hungus also bestowed on the church images of Christ and the apostles in the precious metals, as well as a golden casket to contain the relics of St Andrew, who, he decreed, should henceforth be worshipped as the patron-saint of Scotland.

Much information regarding the early Christians is gleaned from the old registers written in the cloisters of the monastery at St Andrews. These excerpts inform us that St Regulus lived for thirty-two years in the East Neuk, serving God devoutly, teaching and exhorting with simplicity, with diligence, and with cheerfulness; by no means slothful in business, always fervent in spirit, and instant in prayer—thereby obeying to the full the divine injunction.

With Kilrymont as headquarters much good work was accomplished. The Word grew and prospered. Ecclesiology was begun among the Picts. Branch churches were established at Chondrohedalion, a place which was afterwards known as Hyrhat-Nachtan, and latterly Naughton; at Monichi, the present-day village of Moonzie; and at Forteviot, on the banks of the river Earn. And who knows but that even then, while Christianity was still, as one might say, in swaddling clothes, the ancient town of Abernethy may have been the capital of the Pictish dominions? It is not so very far away from Forteviot. Of this, at any rate, there can be no doubt whatever, —Abernethy was a place of much importance fourteen centuries ago, having public schools of learning and professors of sciences and arts, besides being the ecclesiastical metropolis of Scotland, until the episcopate was transferred to St Andrews by Kenneth II., on the dismemberment of the Pictish kingdom in 843 A.D.

From the register extracts we learn that, after the death of

St Regulus and his colleagues, there were in the church of Kilrymont thirteen Culdees who came into office "by succession to their fathers." *Tredecim per successionem carnalem—i.e.*, thirteen by carnal succession—is the exact phrase, and over the few words considerable diversity of opinion has been manifested, and various interpretations put upon them. Among the Culdees marriage was not forbidden, any more than it was for a number of ages in the Christian church. Hereditary succession to the priesthood was, therefore, not uncommon. Latterly, however, this patrimonialism of holy orders became a bitter bone of contention between the Culdees and the Catholic priests, who looked upon succession holding a prior claim to election as disgracing and polluting the church. Married persons might be Culdees, but, after becoming members of the fraternity, they were not permitted to have their wives in their houses.

The Culdees acquired their name, it is suggested, either from the Celtic *Cele-dé*, meaning "servants of God"; or from an abbreviation of the Latin *Cultores Dei*—"worshippers of God." Wordsworth thus nobly eulogizes them :—

> How beautiful your presence, how benign,
> Servants of God! who not a thought will share
> With the vain world; who, outwardly as bare
> As winter trees, yield no fallacious sign
> That the firm soul is clothed with fruit divine!
> Such priest
> Might seem a saintly Image from its shrine
> Descended.
> Evil thoughts are stayed
> At his approach, and low-bowed necks entreat
> A benediction from his voice and hand.

From the convent at St Andrews they scattered themselves all over the country. In the course of time they were joined by the apostles of Columba. New settlements were called *cœnobia*, and were founded by an *abbas* or chief presbyter, and

twelve associates termed *socii*, in imitation, no doubt, of the Great Master and His twelve disciples. The church, as most of the houses thenadays would be, was generally of plain wood: hence we find but few traces of the Culdean existence. Round these institutions the neophytes or new converts would congregate to receive instruction; villages were erected, the adjoining lands were cultivated, grain-mills established, and a territory under spiritual government formed, over which the abbot or an ἐπισκοπος—*i.e.*, an overseer—presided. They had their grades of office—from the bishop down to the *scoloch* or scholar who assisted in the services of the church. The deacons superintended the works of charity, and the *praepositi* acted as teachers in the schools. On baptism one became a brother or sister; on ordination a presbyter—an office which was given only to those who were found worthy and suitable to receive it. The ordained monk was then invested with episcopal authority, and delegated to a certain district.

It was not until the reign of Malcolm Caenmohr, however, that the country was properly divided into dioceses, the power of electing the bishops being vested in the Culdees, who generally chose one from their own society. This privilege they enjoyed up to the year 1273, when—Mr Robert Maule informs us—William Wishart, having been consecrated at Scone, set the Culdees at defiance and excluded them from the episcopateship. On the two succeeding bishops—Fraser and Lamberton—attempting the same thing, the Culdees sent Prior Cumine to plead their cause at Rome before Pope Boniface VIII. But it was of no use. The Pontiff, making belief that he had the prerogative to appoint whomever he pleased, not only confirmed the election, but also sanctified the nominee. Thus it was that the power of the Culdees was gradually annihilated by the intrusion of the Papists, by whom they seem to have been treated very harshly indeed.

Unenlightened and bigoted as the Culdees certainly were, there are not wanting writers who willingly subscribe them-

selves their panegyrists, and speak of them in terms of the highest commendation. They led a holy, wise, and pious life consecrated to the service of the Most High—just such a life that the laity copied their example, became religiously mannered, and in the midst of temporal occupations lived virtuous lives. The most austere of them were anchorites—troglodytes, for their homes were caves—and, withdrawn from the noise of the world and the society of men, day and night they spent in the contemplation of things heavenly and eternal. The majority, however, were conventuals or monks. Many a valuable and useful lesson they bequeathed to the later clergy —lessons of incorruptibility and temperateness, the chief virtue of which was that their lives were so faultlessly consistent with their doctrines.

In conclusion, let us notice where the chief settlements of the Fifan Culdees were situated. The monarchs of olden times, it has already been remarked, were very kind to them. According to the register-excerpts Brude, the last of the Pictish sovereigns, *dedit insulam de Loch-Levin, Deo Omnipotenti, Sancto Servano, et Keledeis heremetis ibi commorantibus et Deo servientibus*— "gave to the Almighty, St Servanus, and the Culdean recluses who were sojourning and serving God there, the island of Loch-leven," called of old The Inch, and, in present-day parlance, St Serf's Isle. The ruins of the ancient priory erected in 842 by Achaius, King of Scots, and dedicated to the honour and glory of St Serf, still appear in the grassy, gravel-fringed island. That square, thick-walled, but now roofless building, is the chapel, and adjacent are the crumbling foundations of the monastery.

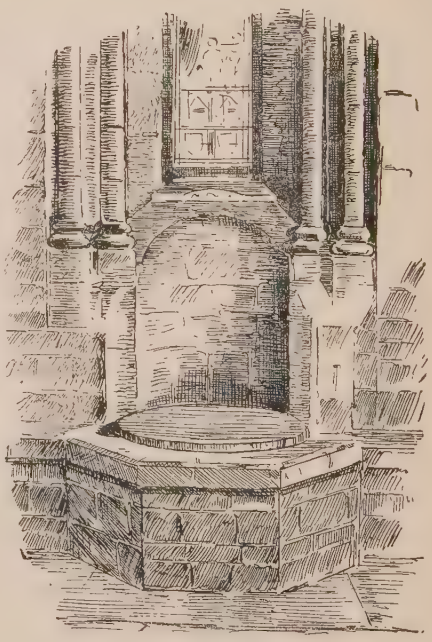
Many are the interesting legends that are told of Servanus or St Serf. If we are to believe the story of Andro of Wyntoun,

> He was of life an holy man—
> The king's son of Canaan,

who, having come to Scotland, received from King Brude all the land round about Culross.

> And there he brocht up St Mungo,
> That syne was bishop of Glasgow.
> Syne frae Culross he passèd even
> To the Inche of Lochleven.
> King Brude, full of devotion,
> Made to St Serf donation
> Of that Inch: and he dwelt there
> Till seven years o'erpassèd were,

when he returned again to Culross, where "his cors found halowit sepulture." Of the Culdees who sat at the feet of this Scottish Gamaliel was the royal Kentigern. We know him better, perhaps, by the apostolic name of St Mungo which is, by interpretation, "The Beloved." He was the love-son of Prince Eugenius and Thenew, daughter of Llew, a semi-pagan ruler of Lothian; and after labouring faithfully and successfully for the evangelization of Strathclyde, he died perfect in life and full of years. St Mungo's grand old city sprang up around the spot where the saint was buried, and in its venerable cathedral—



ST MUNGO'S WELL.

"striking memorial of the piety of ancient days"—may be seen his tomb and holy well.

The monastery of Lochleven—called also Port-moak, signifying "the dwelling of St Moak," who was its first abbot—afterwards became the property of the Austine-monks of St Andrews. The inhabitants, says Sibbald, speaking of his own time, show upon the side of the hill, above the monastery, a concavity like to a seat, where this abbot, for his recreation, sometimes used to solace himself—the tops of the adjoining rocks giving umbrage to the place which they called St Moucum's Seat, *i.e.*, St Moak's Seat. Beneath the green sod of that lonely isle the remains of poor Patrick Graham, the primal archbishop of St Andrews, "a man of worth and learning, inferior to none of his time," find a last resting-place; so do those of St Ronan, an abbot of great sanctity, who lived and died in it at a good old age.

From Macbeth and Gruoch, his queen, the Culdees received the lands of Kirkness on the southern shore of the lake; King Edgar gave them Pittenweem, while from Malcolm Caenmohr they got the "Villa Balchristine"—the district of Balchrystie, near Colinsburgh.

All along the seaboard of Fife, from Kirkcaldy to the Cathedral city, are innumerable water-worn recesses, in which the Culdean anchorites had their homes. At Kilminning, near antique Crail, "with its ruddy-tiled roofs and crow-stepped gables," was a chapel dedicated to the same preacher whose name survives in the village of St Monans. The "stedd" of St Monan was here. It is still pointed out, and for many centuries thousands flocked to his shrine to be healed of their diseases. King David Bruce shared in the bounties; he was here miraculously freed from a barbed arrow-head which had rankled in his kingly flesh for five long years and more. Close inshore is the picturesque, spray-washed church, with its stout, squat-looking tower—David's gift of gratitude. To the east of St Monans is Pittenweem, with its maison-dieu or priory ruins, and

a double-apartmented cave, wherein resided the noted St Fillan and the martyred St Adrian. Of the latter more anon.

An interesting story is told by Camerarius about St Fillan who was abbot of Pittenweem, from which priory he retired about the middle of the seventh century, and died a hermit in the wilds of Glenorchy, A.D. 649. During his abbotship he transcribed the Scriptures, which was "the most innocent and praiseworthy occupation of those who spent their lives in convents." Apparently the task was chiefly carried on in the night-time; yet the worthy abbé did not waste the midnight oil over it, for while he was engaged in the exercise his left arm and hand were illuminated to such an extent that the writer was enabled to do without rush-light—a miracle which, by the way, was a source of much saving to the convent, as St Fillan used to spend whole nights over his transcriptions.

St Adrian or Odran was the chief of a colony of pious people who had their original headquarters in the caves of Caiplie, between Crail and Kilrenny. When the hosts of the heathen Norsemen, however, came swarming overseas to paralyse the Scots and harry their coasts, Adrian and his followers—to the great number of six thousand, says the small voice of the past—sought refuge on the Isle of May; but neither the sanctity of the place nor the religious innocence of the fugitives could restrain the fiery Danes from putting every one of them to a most horrible death. Andro of Wyntoun, with all an old chronicler's punctiliousness for days and dates, tells us the lamentable massacre of the ecclesiastics happened on a "haly Thursday," about the year 874 A.D., when Constantine II. was king. How Thor must have smiled—it was his day—and Odin too,—and all the hosts of the Valhallan pagandom, when they heard the glorious news! Among those who perished on that awful day were Bishops Stolbrand and Glodian, and St Monan whom we have already spoken of—the Archdeacon of St Andrews.

The "lang toon" of Kirkcaldy is supposed to be, though not

unquestionably, of Culdean designation ; and at Dysart—in the *desertum* or fasting-cell from which the town derives its name, the king-born St Serf was rudely awakened, as he "lay eftir maytins in hys bede," by the Wicked One who came to browbeat him with questions of theological disputation. The Saint, however, was obdurate and impregnable, and the Devil, finding flattery as well as argument unavailing, went away acknowledging that Servanus was indeed "a wise man."

Another Culdean anchorite called Conquhar or Conacher bequeathed his name to Kilconquhar. And such was the reputation of these simple-minded early Christians that Constantine III., after losing his trans-Bodotriatic provinces—his territories across the Forth—abdicated his throne and retired to the monastery of St Andrews, in grief and down-heartedness, to spend the eventide of his life among the holy brethren. Nor was Constantine the only monarch who laid aside his regal robes for the rigidity of monastic discipline. In 738 A.D., Coelwolf, king of Northumbria, to whom Bede dedicates his "Ecclesiastical History," withdrew to Lindisfarne, where he died "in the odour of sanctity."

> Many hooded Cenobites there are,
> Who in their private cells have yet a care
> Of public quiet ; unambitious men,
> Counsellors of the world, of piercing ken,
> Whose fervent exhortations from afar
> Move princes to their duty, peace or war.

Christ's Kirk on the Green.

Was never in Scotland heard nor seen
  Sic dancin' nor deray,—
Neither at Falkland on the Green,
  Nor Peebles at the Play,—
As was of wooers, as I ween,
  At Christ's Kirk on a day.
There cam' our kitties, washen clean,
  In their new kirtles of gray,
    Full gay,
At Christ's Kirk on the Green that day.

IT was the month of September, and Leslie's great annual saturnalia, the one event of the year which broke the humdrum monotony of the existence of its simple villagers, had come once more. Along the highways and byways and into the town trooped the merry-makers, for it was a day of great rejoicing and feasting;—ruddy-cheeked rustics; white-faced, feeble old men, some with oaken staffs and some without; sturdy-limbed fishers and weather-beaten, war-worn soldiers; big, hodden-clad ploughmen; sun-tanned and shoeless roguish urchins, hallooing and huddling in and out amongst the crowd; aproned wives and toothless dames; pretty, playful, laughing wenches tricked out in their Sunday frocks of motley hues, tripping with jocund step alongside their joke-exchanging swains; clowns and cripples, weavers and cobblers, tanners and cotters—all sorts of people joggled onward to the scene of revelry.

Soon the village green is reached, and the frolicsome "kitties," brave in their holiday garb, yet so shy and mim-mim

when men come nigh, make haste to trip "the light fantastic toe" upon the springy sward. Resplendent in their roe-skin gloves and Cordovan or Moroccan shoes, they pledge their love and troth, as girls always did and do, and shall do while ages roll, with the swains who have come hither to take part in the amusements.

Of all these maidens, mild as meid,
Was nane sae jimp as Gillie;
As ony rose her cheeks were reid,
Her bosom like the lily.
Fu' yellow, yellow was her heid,
But she of love was silly;
Though a' her friends had sworn her deid,
She'd have nane but sweet Willie
Allan
At Christ's Kirk on the Green that day.

She scorn'd Jock and jeer'd at him,
Made mouths at him wi' mocks;
He'd have loved her,—she wouldn't let him,
Nathless his yellow locks.
He cherished her,—she bade gae hang him,
Scarce worth was he twa clocks;
She shamefully his short-gown set him,
His limbs were like twa rocks,
She said,
At Christ's Kirk on the Green that day.

Let us pity fair-haired Jock with the spindle-shaped legs! Surely he needs it all when the object of his most earnest affections bids him go and hang himself, asserting that a couple of beetles make up the sum total of his worth. Yes, poor Jock, accept our sincerest sympathies!

By and by another rustic youth appears upon the scene. Stephen is his name. Light and nimble of foot is he, and such is his reputation that none are there who can outdo him in the dance. His eyes roam searchingly over the vast assembly—anon he catches sight of Maud, another of the village belles—

and in a twinkling the springal appears at her side, begging with might and main for the next dance. And now the mirth grows fast and furious as Tam Lutar, the cunning minstrel, sways the crowd, like an old-time Orpheus, with his thrilling melodies.

Never was tripped such country dance before. The ramping, lilting throngs, roused by the potent tune, moved merrily along in jiggling, pattering rows. Then the lightfoots or quick reels of Scotland gave place to the foreign or imported steps, and Towsie, taking a skip into the midst of the roysterers, danced *à la France* and treated the spectators to an exhibition of solo moriscos. All went well

> Till Robin Roy began to revel,
> And Downie to him draggit;
> "Let be!" quoth Jock, and called him cavil,
> And by the tail him tuggit.

A scene of wild and clamorous commotion followed, and the poet whose chief and patriotic design is to ridicule—for the powerful shafts of satire seldom fail to lay ignorance bare and correct malpractices—the awkward mismanagement of the bow and the neglect into which archery has fallen in his own kingdom, throws all his art and skill into the story to load his mock heroes with the most scathing irony. And mock heroes he assuredly makes them! In furious rage one bent a bow, and, fixing an arrow in the string, let fly with all his might at his antagonist. With inimitably arch humour the minstrel pictures the result.

> Through baith the cheeks he meant to pierce him,
> Or through the chafts have shot him;
> But, by ane mile, it cam' not near him;—
> I cannot tell what ailed him
> There,
> At Christ's Kirk on the Green that day.
>
> With that ane friend of his cried, "Fy!"
> And up an arrow drew;

He bendèd it sae furiously,
The bow in flinders flew.
It was the will of God, trow I;
For, had the tree been true,
Men said, that kenn'd his archery,
Then he'd have slain enou'
Fu' soon,
At Christ's Kirk on the Green that day.

Ane haistie hensour called Harry,
Wha was an archer train'd,
Tuik up an arrow withouten tarry,
Sic turmoil so him tened *(angered)*.
I wot not whether his hand could vary,
Or the man was his freynd;
But he escaped through michts o' Mary,
As man that nae ill mean'd
That time,
At Christ's Kirk on the Green that day.

And then

Ane sturdy chield that stude him neist
Lousit ane shot with ire;
He meant to pierce him in the breist—
The bolt flew ower the byre.
Ane cryit, "Fy!" He had slain ane priest
Ane mile beyond the myre;
Then bow and bag frae him he keist,
And fled as fierce as fire
Off flint,
At Christ's Kirk on the Green that day.

Like a raging lion Lowrie leapt into the thick of the fray, resolved to show that his hand at least had not yet lost its cunning. Yeomanlike and bravely he fitted the feather in the bowstring, and essayed to send the shaft through Harry's heart; but such was Harry's fortune that, though the arrow struck full and fair as the archer meant it should, his leathern doublet saved him. Nevertheless,

The buff sae bousteously abaisit him
That to the earth he dashèd doon;

The t'other for dead imagined him,
And fled out of the toon.
The wives cam' forth and up they pull'd him,
And found life in the loon;
Then with three shouts they raisèd him,
And brocht him frae his swoon
Again,
At Christ's Kirk on the Green that day.

Soon, however, the combatants perceive that archery like theirs will never do. The yews are, therefore, flung aside—forks and flails are eagerly seized, and laid with much condescension and, you may be sure, with much greater force upon the shoulders of each hero. Lustily and more lustily fall the blows—what though bones are broken!—stones hurtle ominously through the air, crashing, thick and fast, on heads and backs and everywhere, doing deadly damage—and louder, ever louder grows the clamour as, one by one, the skirmishers fall wounded to the ground, groaning and writhing in their agony. Then the lamentations of women break in once more as the wives and virgins, wringing their hands in woful plight, wander through the crowd, crying dejectedly, "Lo! where lies my love?"

And, just as nowadays, a wordy strife—for the tongue is essentially woman's weapon of warfare—went on between the dames of the vanquished heroes. "Ilk gossip other grievit." But, a battle of words, however bitter they were, would not suffice. More solid instruments had to be used; and so

Some strak with poles; some gathered stanes,—
Some fled and weill escapit.

Among the latter was Tam Lutar, who, minstrel-like, ignominiously sought safety in flight. The waggons which had helped to bring the merchandise to the Fair lay invitingly near, and ever since the commencement of hostilities Tam's eagle eye had watched those wains. Was it wonder, then, that now, when his life was in deadly peril, he sought their welcome shelter—a shelter so protective that he at last reached home

with unbruised bones, says the bard, though many were the foemen who would bear, for all time coming, the scars of that glorious day's renown? And while the minstrel lies safely ensconced beneath the friendly merchant-waggons, the struggle waxed wilder and wilder, till

Heich Hutcheon with ane hazel ryce,
To redd, did through them rummel;
He knock'd them down like timid mice,—
He was nae baty-bummel (*vain braggart*).
Though he was wicht, he was not wyss
With sic janglers to jummil,
For frae his thoom' they dang ane slice,
Till he cried, "Barla-fummil!
I'm slain!"
At Christ's Kirk on the Green that day.

When that he saw his blude sae reid,
To fleg micht nae man let him;
He guessed it had been for auld feid (*feud*),
And thocht ane cried, "Have at him!"
He gart his feet defend his heid—
The fair sairer it sat him—
Till he was pass'd out of all pleid (*pleading*);
He'd have been swift that gat him
Through speed,
At Christ's Kirk on the Green that day.

The town Soutar next presents himself. Ill it had fared with that worthy man in the desperate struggle; and now, at its close,

His body was with blude embroiden,—
He groaned like ony ghaist.

To soothe his dolorous grief and smarting pains his wife, a dame with flaxen locks of shining gold, clung lovingly to his arm.

Her glittering hair that was fu' gowden
Sae hard in love him laced,
That, for her sake, he was not yowden (*tardy*),
The seven miles he was chased,
And mair,
At Christ's Kirk on the Green that day.

Then came the Miller.

He was a man of manlie mak',
To meet him was nae mowis (*joke*);
There durst not ten come him to tak',
Sae 'noyèd he their nowis (*noses*).
Th' ambushment hale about him brak,
And bicker'd him with bowis;
Syne trait'rously behind his back
They hewed him on the howis
Behind,
At Christ's Kirk on the Green that day.

Twa that were heidmen of the heird
Ran each on each like rams;
Then followed feymen, richt unaffeird (*not equipped*),
Shower'd blows with barrow-trams.
And where their mouths were unageird,
They gat upon the gams (*gums*),
Till bludy barkit was their beird,
As if they'd worried lambs
Maist like,
At Christ's Kirk on the Green that day.

The wives caist up ane hideous yell,
When all their younkers yokit;
As fierce as lightning-flashes fell,
Freiks (*youths*) to the field they flockit.
The carles with clubs did other quell,
While blude at breists out-bokkit;
Sae rudely rang the common-bell,
While all the steeple rockit
For noise,
At Christ's Kirk on the Green that day.

When they had bray'd like baited bulls,
And fire-wood burnt in bales,
They were as meek as ony mules
That maimèd are with mails (*a disease*).
For faintness these forfochen fules
Fell down like flauchter-fales,

When fresh men cam' and hail'd the dules,
And dang them doon in dales (*heaps*)
Fu' soon,
At Christ's Kirk on the Green that day.

When all was done, Dick with an aix
Cam' forth to fell ane fudder (*cart load*);
Quoth he, "Where are yon hangit smaiks
Wha would ha'e slain my bruder?"
His wife bade him "Gae hame, Gib Glaiks!"
And so did Meg, his mudder;—
He turn'd and gave them baith their paiks,
For he durst ding nae other,
Men said,
At Christ's Kirk on the Green that day.

Such is the story of Christ's Kirk on the Green—a humorous tale centuries old, and told by the poet-king of Scotland, James First, the Dunfermlinite. "How few of the sceptered rank," says one writer, "have distinguished themselves as men of genius! and rarer still, how few to rank and genius have added the qualities of the heart, virtue, and public spirit! So rare a phenomenon was James I. of Scotland." Every Scotsman has heard of the scholarly attainments of that inestimable prince; therefore, when we say that James I. was the author of the poem, the assertion is unhesitatingly though most guardedly made.

There are those who ascribe the authorship of the drama to "the Gudeman of Ballangeich," the fifth James Stuart, scholar and poet as well as adventurer, and yet in this wise only do they make their ascription—"Composed, as is supposed, by King James V." A futile, merely suppositive argument on the very face of it, and more futile still when it is remembered that the earliest of those editors who list to the side of the fifth James did not publish the poem until 149 years after that prince's death. Antagonistic to this, let us place the fact that the George Bannatyne manuscripts, finished in 1568, not so very long after the decease of the "Red Tod" at Falkland Palace, have, as was the fashion of the time, "Quod King James I.," written after the poem.

In the second place, the Fifthites claim that the mention of the plays of Peebles in the opening stanza is an infallible argument, they holding that these plays belong to a more modern era than that of the poet-king. But the feasts of Beltane, for which Peebles was so famous, are, in common parlance, as old as the very hills themselves. So much for the second argument —it also is abortive. An antiquity of language and phraseology runs through the whole poem—an antiquity more antiquated than is encountered in the poems of James V.'s reign. In fact, the present-day reader finds it difficult, very difficult indeed, to understand the phrases and words which crop up here and there without the aid of a glossary. The accurate and learned Lord Hailes, whose argumentative criticisms favour the claims of the Gaberlunzie King, only says, after all, that his readers will observe that he speaks doubtfully of James I. being the author, —an admission which, if nothing else, is a direct acknowledgment that James I., in his opinion, may have been the author.

But there is a purpose, a striking purpose, and a double meaning in the poem. It gives us an admirable portrayal of ancient Scottish life, and, were its only merit that of being descriptive of the humours and manners of our ancestors four and a half centuries ago, it must always be esteemed a very valuable relic. Its chief end, however, is the preservation of archery as a military art in Scotland, the practice of which had been sadly neglected while James was a prisoner in England. His first step on coming home was to pass acts ordaining "every person after twelve years of age to busk himself as an archer." He did not stop there. He appointed wapenshaws to be held four times a year with bow and arrows. And he went further still. He ridiculed, with all the ironical satire his genius could launch forth, the awkwardness of the peasantry in managing the bow. That scathing sarcasm we find in "Christ's Kirk on the Green."

When Tytler puts this argument forward for those who stand

on the earlier platform, Lord Hailes scoffs at its triflingness, and wonders what effect ridicule in a poem could produce among an illiterate peasantry at a time when, probably, not one in a thousand of them could read, and when printing had not yet been introduced into Scotland. Evidently his lordship forgets that in the olden times many of the peasantry could repeat poems,—that, though poems were not printed, they were transmitted orally from mouth to mouth,—that the evenings in James I.'s reign were whiled away "in reading of romances, in piping and in singing." Witness the result of such a custom—our splendid array of grand old ballads! On the other hand, the statutes of James V. make it perfectly obvious that the use of the bow in war was, with the introduction of fire-arms, quite laid aside. It is not likely then that the immortalized Fitz-James would write so disparagingly and ironically of the archery of his kingdom, even though it continued to maintain its ground as an amusement or exercise.

So much for the authorship of the poem; now for the site of "Christ's Kirk on the Green." And here let me say that much controversy also enshrouds the scene of action. Sibbald, the chronicler of early Scottish poetry, says, without any reservation whatever, that if there was no church at, or village near, St Andrews called Christ's-kirk or Cross-kirk, the author has perhaps given that name to the college church of St Salvator, a term which he might think unfit for a popular poem. One tradition indeed asserts that it was a village within or near—a very fallible tradition apparently—the parish of Lesly in Aberdeenshire. Had it been a village—and it must thenadays have been a considerable village—would it have wholly disappeared off the face of the earth within the space of a century or two and nobody have known aught concerning it? No! Methinks it was only what the poem calls it—a kirk standing on or beside the village-green.

Leslie in Fife is believed to have been the scene, and the occasion the annual fair which took place, as we have seen, in

September—a suitable season, by the way, for the open-air dancing manœuvres detailed in the opening stanzas. Allan Ramsay, who wrote two other cantos to the drama which he makes the prelude of a village wedding, supposes right away that the Fifan Leslie was the locality when he writes :—

> Now frae th' east nook o' Fife the dawn
> Speel'd westlines up the lift ;

and Professor Tennant, in Anster Fair, bears similar testimony when, in Canto II., verse 29, he speaks of

> The upland hamlet, where, as told in song,
> Tam Lutar play'd of yore his lively rants.

If it were the Aberdeenshire Lesly, would the kitties, being in that case Highland girls, have been dressed in "kirtillis of Lynkome or lincum licht?" Probably not. Besides, the Fifan Leslie was famed in the good old days for its games. Was it not, gloriously or ingloriously, the Donnybrook of Scotland? Had it not its bull-fights too?—and is there not still the famous bull-stone, with its ring, to which the baited beasts were fastened previous to the commencement of the sport? Had it not its cock-fights also?—and is the Barrace Yett, or Gate of Combats, leading from the space of ground within which the combatants were enclosed, not still pointed out? Yea, of a surety this was the very scene of the noisy festival!

But again, another and stronger and decisive argument arises out of the poem itself. The names of the principal characters are by no manner of means Aberdonish. In "Peebles to the Play," mentioned in the fourth line, the *dramatis personæ* have Border names to suit the locality; so also in "Christ's Kirk on the Green," the names, if not altogether Fifish, certainly belong to a district not far distant.

Macduff: Fife's Lion-Hearted Thane.

LET your memories wander backwards over the span of centuries to the reign of Duncan I.—that is, to the year 1033 A.D., or thereabouts. It was then that the Danish marauders descended upon the coast of Fife and committed great ravages there, until they were driven back to their ships by Macbeth, a son of the Thane of Glamis, and Banco, the Thane of Fochaber, who had been despatched against them, Duncan himself being too old, and his sons too young and inexperienced to conduct hostilities. After his victories Macbeth returns home; and, as he marches at the head of his victorious troops through the Harmuir, a gloomy, blasted wilderness near Forres, he is stopped by three witches with this strange, threefold, prophetic greeting:—

> "All hail, Macbeth! hail to thee, Thane of Glamis!
> All hail, Macbeth! hail to thee, Thane of Cawdor!
> All hail, Macbeth! thou shalt be king hereafter!"

The wondrous news surprises him. Before long Finlack, his father, dies, and the first part of the witches' prophecy is fulfilled. Soon after, too, a messenger comes from King Duncan, thanking him for his gallant services against the Norwegian vikings and creating him Thane of Cawdor, the former thane having been put to death for his disloyalty. So the second sorceress also spoke the truth. But titles make him ambitious, and his ambition is fired and fanned by a terribly ambitious wife, who goes so far as to counsel—nay, compel him to murder his sovereign and usurp the throne. For this

purpose the good king and his sons and many of the nobles are invited to Macbeth's castle, near Inverness, where a great feast is prepared to welcome them.

Then was committed one of the blackest and direst crimes that have ever darkened the pages of history, or made fiction horrible. "Come," says Lady Macbeth to herself,

> "Come, you spirits
> That tend on mortal thoughts, unsex me here;
> And fill me, from the crown to the toe, topful
> Of direst cruelty! make thick my blood,
> Stop up the access and passage to remorse,
> That no compunctious visitings of nature
> Shake my fell purpose!"

And into her lord, the great Glamis, the worthy Cawdor, she instils this vixenish advice:—

> "Your face, my thane, is as a book, where men
> May read strange matters. To beguile the time
> Look like the time; bear welcome in your eye,
> Your hand, your tongue; look like the innocent flower,
> But be the serpent under it."

The twain plan the deed. They "mock the time with fairest show," and Duncan, fatigued with his day's journey, yet immeasurably contented—good man that he is—retires to rest. With wine and wassail they drench the king's chamberlains; and, nerved with fresh draughts of liquid flame, perpetrate the horrid deed—a deed whose memory years will never, never erase. What a rough, unruly night it is! The very heavens seem frightened; the castle itself is feverish and trembles. Macbeth, the inhuman monster, starts at every sound, and, as he gazes on his bloodstained hands, groans appallingly:—

> "Will all great Neptune's ocean wash this blood
> Clean from my hand? No! this my hand will rather
> The multitudinous seas incarnadine,
> Making the green one red."

Morning dawns—the day after the storm—but men are scarcely prepared to witness such a wreckage. At the outer gate of the castle there is heard a loud and prolonged knock—knock—knocking. It is Macduff, the lion-hearted Thane of Fife, who knocks. A parley with the drunken porter, and he and Lennox enter. In a trice he is conducted to the monarch's bedchamber ; in a trice returns horror-stricken, crying :—

> " Confusion now hath made his masterpiece !
> Most sacrilegious murder hath broke ope
> The Lord's anointed temple, and stole hence
> The life o' the building. . . Awake ! awake !—
> Ring the alarum bell !—Murder ! and treason !
> Banco, and Donalbain ! Malcolm ! awake !
> Shake off this drowsy sleep, death's counterfeit,
> And look on death itself !—Up, up, and see
> The great doom's image."

The traitress, Lady Macbeth, is carried out in a pretended faint. Malcolm and Donaldbane, Duncan's sons, suspect their host and, remembering that

> There's daggers in men's smiles ;
> The near in blood, the nearer bloody,

flee—the former to Cumberland and the latter to the Hebrides. Suspicion, of course, rests on the fugitives, and Macduff, with the others, for a while believes them guilty of the parricide ; but he, too, soon sees the smiling daggers. Macbeth usurps the throne, obtains his heart's wish, and in pompous pageantry proceeds to Scone to be crowned. After the coronation ceremony he repairs to his Castle of Dunsinane among the Sidlaw Hills, and there lives a despotic, Czar-like life. And so the third witch's prophecy has come true.

With a view of ingratiating himself as far as he can into the good graces of his subjects, he gives a great feast to the nobles. Banco, the Thane of Fochaber and Macbeth's comrade-in-arms in the late king's army, is absent from the banquet. By the sovereign's orders he has been murdered, and in the banqueting-

hall appears his ghost, whose marrowless bones and glaring eyes unnerve the king, a circumstance at which the courtiers and nobles greatly marvel. Macduff's place, too, is vacant, for he has purposely denied his person at the feast. This is how it came about. Macbeth had begun to feel his insecurity, and so had ordered all his Thanes and vassals to send oxen to cart stones and wood for the fortification of his stronghold. One day, while the festivities were going on at the castle, the king crept out to see how the work was progressing, and observed one pair of oxen scarcely fit to drag their heavy loads.

"Whose oxen are these?" he demanded in angry tones.

"They belong to the Thane of Fife, sire," was the reply.

"Then," cried Macbeth, and his words were full of potent hatred, "since the Thane of Fife sends such worthless cattle to do my work, I will make him drag the burdens himself."

"NO, COUSIN, I'LL TO FIFE."

When the threat reached the ears of Macduff, he needed no second warning to tell him what to do. Then it was, in answer

to Rosse's inquiry as to whether he was to stay to the feast that he gave voice to those memorable words :—"No, cousin, I'll to Fife." Snatching from the table a loaf of bread and hastily calling his retainers together, he galloped back to his own sheriffdom of Fife. The story goes that when he arrived at the ferry over the Firth of Tay near Dundee, he had nothing wherewith to pay the boatmen except the loaf of bread, so for a long time afterwards the place was styled the Ferry of the Loaf.

All this time Malcolm Caenmohr, or Great Head, has been spending the years of his exilement at the court of Edward the Confessor, who had received him with open arms. News is brought to the king that Macduff is fled to England—

> . . . to pray the holy king, on his aid
> To wake Northumberland and warlike Siward ;
> That by the help of these, we may again
> Give to our tables meat, sleep to our nights ;
> Free from our feasts and banquets bloody knives ;
> Do faithful homage, and receive fresh honours,—
> All which we pine for now.

But ere the long-wished-for succour comes, deeds of the most blood-curdling atrocity are to be enacted. To a dark cave, where the witches are dancing round their charm-brewing cauldron, goes the tyrant, to learn his fate from the weird sisterhood. Out of the hell-broth pot the apparition of an armed head rises and exclaims :—

> "Macbeth ! Macbeth ! Macbeth ! beware Macduff !
> Beware the Thane of Fife !"

One's not enough ; a minute after another rises, and then another, a crowned child, bearing in its hand a tree-branch, ascends and foretells that

> Macbeth will never vanquished be, until
> Great Birnam Wood to high Dunsinane Hill
> Shall come against him.

Thus soothed and encouraged, he sets out upon his arrant and heaven-provoking purpose ; to crown his thoughts with acts —and bloody acts to be ; to surprise the Castle of Macduff,

> **Seize upon Fife ; give to the edge o' the sword**
> **His wife, his babes, and all unfortunate souls**
> **That trace his line.**

He hied him to Cupar, where, on what is now the Schoolhill, stood the proud fortalice—the home, it is supposed, of the Thane of Fife. Emissaries are sent on in advance to secure, if possible, the Maarmor of the Kingdom. Once more we see the "shag-eared villains" ; once more the glittering steel is raised to strike—the guiltless blood is shed—young Macduff lies bleeding in his father's hall, while his hapless mother flees to the strong Castle of Kennoway, which looks out upon the Firth of Forth. Here she finds, with her faithful followers, a temporary retreat. And, while the heroic woman defends the fortress, Macduff is safely lodged in one of the numerous caves which pierce the coast of Fife. In time, at a moment when the vigilance of the pursuers is relaxed, the fishermen of Earlsferry, seizing the opportunity and regardless of the consequences, ferry him over to the other side.

Meanwhile Lady Macduff is eagerly scanning the waters, and, as she beholds the skiff urged through the waves by willing hands, goes to the castle wall and defiantly taunts the king who is standing below. "Do you see yon white sail upon the sea ?" she asks. "Yonder goes Macduff to the court of England. You will never see him again, cruel tyrant, till he comes back with young Prince Malcolm to pull you down from the throne and put you to death."

Baffled in his attempts to capture the stronghold or its inmates the king returned home to Dunsinane, feeling assured that, sooner or later, the whole Macduffan race would be extinguished. Evidently the brave lady had intended to follow her noble husband, for tradition relates that she and her two

children were at last foully murdered within the walls of Dunnimarle Castle, near Culross, which marked the western confines of the Thane's territory.

And now, while Scotland weeps and bleeds, while wound follows wound, while vice struts rampant through the land, and the diabolical Macbeth, who smacks of every sin that has a name, plays the monstrous tyrant, what is Malcolm, the rightful heir to the throne, doing? What is Macduff doing? Malcolm, not much! Yet that little effort Macduff is fanning into a flame. He shakes the procrastinating prince to a sense of his duty; urges him—upbraids him—taunts him—goads him to action. Southwards, with lightning speed, rides Rosse and informs his cousin that his castle has been surprised, his wife and children slaughtered.

The heart of Macduff melts at the sad news; his grief is so great that he cannot speak. When once his sorrow can find words he groans:—

> "All my pretty ones.
> Did you say all?—O hell-kite!—all?
> At one fell swoop?
> Did Heaven look on,
> And would not take their part? Sinful Macduff,
> They were all struck for thee! naught that I am,
> Not for their own demerits, but for mine,
> Fell slaughter on their souls: Heaven rest them now!
> O, gentle Heaven,
> Cut short all intermission; front to front,
> Bring thou this fiend of Scotland and myself;
> Within my sword's length set him; if he 'scape,
> Heaven forgive him too!"

Soldiers, to arms! The avenging sword unsheath! Scotlandwards they hasten with a formidable force, the English king assisting with ten thousand men under the command of the good Earl Siward. Dunsinane at length appears in view. Inside the castle the queen-tyrant keeps her nightly vigils; she is a somnambulist—a mad somnambulist now—and anon and

anon rehearses the bloody deeds of the past. Great, too, are the preparations which the usurper is making in his madness and fury.

> Those he commands, move only to command,
> Nothing in love ; now he feels his title
> Hang loose about him, like a giant's robe
> Upon a dwarfish thief.

Happy would he be, yet happy is not. Did not the witches prophesy that he was safe till Birnam Wood came to Dunsinane Hill? Did not the spirits say that woman-born man was powerless against him? Avaunt, then, black fears, avaunt! Begone, however, they will not! and in despair he mutters :—

> "My way of life
> Is fall'n into the sear, the yellow leaf."

By this time Malcolm's army has reached Birnam Wood. The good Macduff commands the soldiers each to bear before him the branch of a tree to overshadow their force—thereby unwittingly fulfilling the witches' prophecy, and exhorts them to don "industrious soldiership." In the morning the sentinel on the height of Dunsinane descries in the distance such a sight as he has never seen before. He hastens to his lord and exclaims :—

> "As I did stand my watch upon the hill,
> I look'd toward Birnam, and anon, methought
> The wood began to move."

Much marvels Macbeth at the leafy spectacle; and then he suddenly remembers the prophecy he had heard long years ago of the coming of Birnam Wood to high Dunsinane Hill. Surely it is coming now. Nearer, ever nearer, it approaches over the wide valley—"a moving grove." Down drop the branchy screens, and the besiegers are ready to acquit themselves like heroes. The trumpets peal forth a ringing blast of clamorous, murderous resolution and defiance. The tyrant buckles on his

harness and prepares him for the fight, convinced that all, or nearly all, is over. Nobly struggle the combatants; the castle yields at last. Hither and thither rushes the avenging Macduff, seeking his enemy. Soon he espies him, and in a tone of angry thunder cries:—

> "Then yield thee, coward,
> And live to be the show and gaze o' the time;
> We'll have thee, as our rarer monsters are,
> Painted upon a pole; and underwrit,
> *Here you may see the tyrant!*"

And in reply the fiendish wretch exclaims:—

> "Before my body
> I throw my warlike shield: lay on, Macduff!"

The vials of wrath are opened, and with frantic fury the combat deepens. Vigorously ply the swords; blow for blow is given; fiercer and fiercer grows the strife; fast and furious fall the strokes; harder, ever harder sounds the claymore's clang; no quarter's asked, none given. They strike—they lunge—they shout—they tear—they reel—they fall—now one, the other: down, down, down goes Macduff—he is up again, wildly and more wildly wielding the willing sword upon the embattered shield; down goes Macbeth, the fiend-butcher, the arch-monster, to rise no more. He has met a felon's doom, and paid the penalty of his infernal crimes. His face in death expresses what his passions were—demonish, blood-thirsty, and destructive. While he lies weltering in his blood, and the "life flutters convulsed in his quivering limbs," Macduff, with frenzied eagerness and exulting rage, cuts off his head and bears it in triumph to his sovereign, shouting, "Hail! King of Scotland, hail!" And Malcolm, in the first flush of victory, replies:—

> "My thanes and kinsmen,
> Henceforth be Earls, the first that ever Scotland
> In such an honour named."

After Caenmohr had got securely settled down in his kingdom, he did not forget his true-hearted knights. Macduff became his favourite noble; honours and privileges — he scorned mercenariness and asked no pension or grants of land—were heaped upon him, and these, when he died, were bequeathed to his successors. Among these peculiar privileges was the right of placing the sovereign on the coronation chair, the command of the van of the king's army, and the atonement with money for manslaughter. In a narrow glen in the Ochil Hills stand the remains of Macduff's Cross, a cruciform sanctuary, which was but one of the immunities the Earls of Fife exercised within their sheriffdom. To it and its precincts a homicide—were he only a Macduff—could flee to escape the wrath of the avenger of blood; once inside the sanctuary he was safe from molestation.

But to come to hard facts. Many people would have us believe that Macduff was a mythical personage. Not a bit of it! Thanks to the genius of the prince of English dramatists all the world knows him, though the play of *Macbeth*, from which the story has been mainly drawn, contains many by-truths.

The tyrant was not slain at Dunsinane. His enemies, says the ancient historian, had scarcely cast from them their boughs when Macbeth, beholding their numbers, betook himself to flight. At Belmont, near Meigle, he rallied his shattered forces, and another fierce and determined stand was made. Once more, however, he was compelled to flee, until at length, perceiving that Macduff was hard at his heels, he leapt from his steed, crying—"Thou traitor, why follow ye me who am not appointed to be slain by any creature that is born of a woman? Come on, therefore, and receive thy reward, which thou deservest for thy pains,"—and there he lifted up his sword, thinking to have slain him. But Macduff, eluding the blow, replied—"It is true, Macbeth, and now shalt thine insatiable cruelty have an end; for I am even he that thy wizards have told thee of, who was never born of woman"; and there and then, adds the chronicler, he stepped unto him and slew him. A spot in the

neighbourhood of Loch Auchlossen, in the parish of Lumphanan, Aberdeenshire, is still pointed out as the place where the usurper met his doom, the dramatist making Dunsinane Hill the scene of the tragic event expressly, no doubt, for the sake of stagecraft.

Macduff, let us repeat, was no fictitious character manufactured in the fertile brain of a clever tragedian, but the hereditary Thane or Maarmor of Fife, being the eighth in descent from Fifus Duffus, a chieftain of great power and heroism, who lived about the middle of the ninth century and received from Kenneth II., on the anatomization of the Pictish kingdom in 843 A.D., a grant of all the lands known as Othdinia, extending from Fifeness to Clackmannan and from the Forth to the Tay. This territory, which the leader of the *Dubh* or black-complexioned people had won by his valorous deeds, has ever since gone by the name of "the kingdom of Fife."

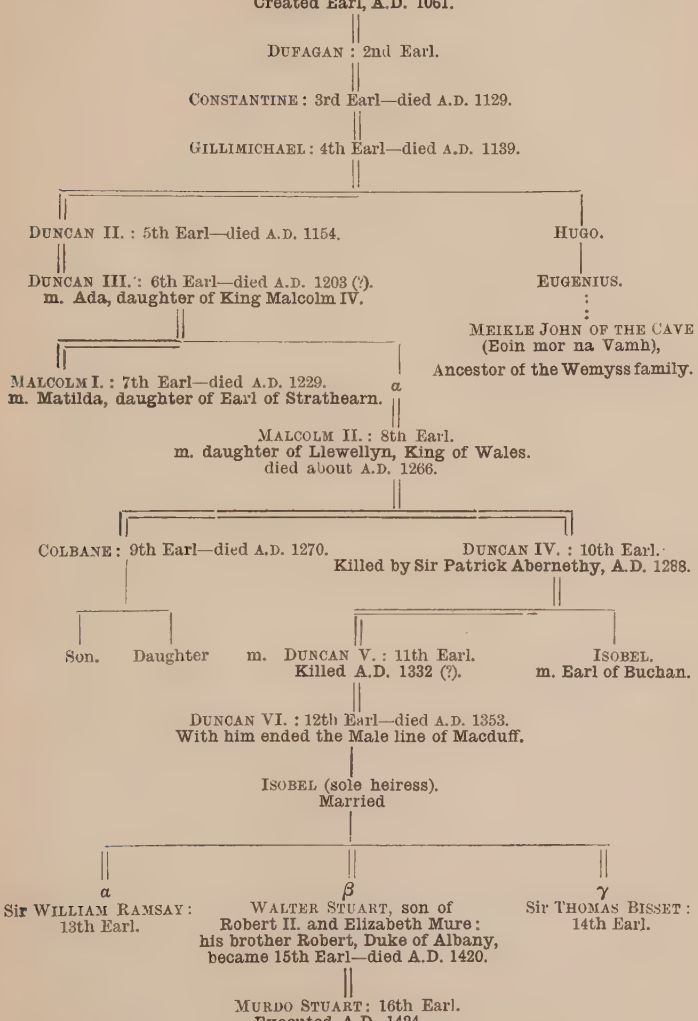
But there are some who unconsciously speak of the Macduffan territory as a mythical kingdom. Not so. In the early days of the Scottish monarchy Fife was recognised as the very heart of the country, and Chionaith Chruaidh—*i.e.*, Kenneth the Hardy —the founder of that monarchy, frequently alluded to its inhabitants as the men of "the kingdom." Many of MacAlpine's descendants, too, made it their headquarters during these hard-featured times. And, says Holinshead, "there remaine unto this day (A.D. 1570) tokens and old ruines of a castell situate betwixt the river of Levin and St Kenneth's Church, which—as yet appeareth—was fenced about with seven rampires and as manie ditches, wherein the posteritie of this worthie man (*i.e.*, Fifus Duffus) after his deceasse had their habitation by the space of manie hundred yeares." This I take to be the Maiden Castle which, on the supposed site of an ancient Pictish fort, crowned the summit of a round hill near Kennoway.

Eight centuries ago the county was dotted with the keeps and fortalices of the Macduffs. Besides the strongholds of Cupar, Kennoway, and Dunnimarle, already mentioned, there

was also that of Lindores, erected to secure the kingdom against the incursions of the turbulent Highlanders. Almost wholly blotted off the face of the earth during the Wars of Independence, not a vestige of it now remains. At Wemyss stands another of the Macduffan fortifications—Wemyss Castle, nowadays a magnificent and imposing edifice, partly ancient and partly modern, belonging to the Wemyss family, who trace their genealogy straight up to *Adam* Macduff's very front doorway. The Mar of Falkland, too, was one of their fortresses until it passed into the hands of the Scottish sovereigns in the reign of James I. Earlshall, among the woods of Leuchars, belonged to the Earls of Fife, and so did the lands of Denmiln, near Newburgh, before the Balfours acquired them.

The earlier Thanes appear to have resided at or near Markinch —at Dalginche, which is recognised by Major as the ancient capital of Fife, where "those accused of theft had to find surety for sisting themselves in judgment." Be this as it may, we find that the church of Markinch, commonly called the Kirk of Macduff, was donated to the priory of St Andrews during the reign of William the Lion by Eugene, the great-great-grandson of the first earl. It seems also that the lion-hearted Thane changed the place of residence from Dalginche to Cupar, which Sibbald terms "the ancientest part of their estates," and that Cupar continued to rank as the seat of the sheriffdom up to the middle of the fourteenth century. This is evident from a charter wherein Duncan, the last Macduff, gives to the laird of Wester Fernie, *officium constabularii castri nostri de Cupro in Fyfe*—the office of constabulary of our castle of Cupar in Fife.

THE FAMILY OF MACDUFF.


DUNCAN MACDUFF, THANE OF FIFE.
Created Earl, A.D. 1061.
DUFAGAN : 2nd Earl.
CONSTANTINE : 3rd Earl—died A.D. 1129.
GILLIMICHAEL : 4th Earl—died A.D. 1139.
DUNCAN II. : 5th Earl—died A.D. 1154.
HUGO.
DUNCAN III. : 6th Earl—died A.D. 1203 (?).
m. Ada, daughter of King Malcolm IV.
EUGENIUS.
MEIKLE JOHN OF THE CAVE
(Eoin mor na Vamh),
Ancestor of the Wemyss family.
MALCOLM I. : 7th Earl—died A.D. 1229.
m. Matilda, daughter of Earl of Strathearn.
α
MALCOLM II. : 8th Earl.
m. daughter of Llewellyn, King of Wales.
died about A.D. 1266.
COLBANE : 9th Earl—died A.D. 1270.
DUNCAN IV. : 10th Earl.
Killed by Sir Patrick Abernethy, A.D. 1288.
Son.
Daughter
m.
DUNCAN V. : 11th Earl.
Killed A.D. 1332 (?).
ISOBEL.
m. Earl of Buchan.
DUNCAN VI. : 12th Earl—died A.D. 1353.
With him ended the Male line of Macduff.
ISOBEL (sole heiress).
Married
α
Sir WILLIAM RAMSAY :
13th Earl.
β
WALTER STUART, son of
Robert II. and Elizabeth Mure :
his brother Robert, Duke of Albany,
became 15th Earl—died A.D. 1420.
γ
Sir THOMAS BISSET :
14th Earl.
MURDO STUART : 16th Earl.
Executed A.D. 1424.

The Murder of Rothesay.

Yes, lay thee down,
And while thy struggling pulses flutter,
Bid the grey monk his soul-mass mutter,
And the deep bell its death tone utter—
Thy life is gone.

—*Scott.*

YES, poor, misguided, hapless Rothesay, thou art gone! Not the storms of State weighed thee down, nor the assassin's dagger smote thee—that verily had been the kindest cut of all, nor the swords of thy country's foes, though thou wert ever a gallant knight—not these, but the diabolical machinations of viperous villains who drained thy noble blood while yet it was warm. Ay, Rothesay, thou art gone, but thy memory is not!

The tragedy we are about to relate is nearly five hundred years old, yet for all that it is one of those dramatic events in history round which age only seems to warp a charm of ever-greenness, and which, though often rehearsed, never become stale or uninteresting. There are good old stories which don't mind being retold once in a while, and this is one of them. Mark Antony, in his memorable speech over the body of his murdered friend, the mighty Cæsar, bade the Romans who had tears prepare to shed them. So in Scotland, five centuries ago, many were the hearts that bled and many the eyes that were dimmed with tears as the news spread like wildfire throughout the country of the terrible fate which had befallen their gallant prince, the Duke of Rothesay. And to-day, after all that long expanse of time, the sad story pulls at the heart-strings of young

and old as lustily as ever. Still does the cheek blanch, the lip quiver in sympathetic pity, the tear-drop trickle down unheeded every now and then, and the ready tongue falter chokingly between the words, as we read the mournful tale. Kindly follow us as we attempt its recital.

One afternoon long ago a company of horsemen, some of them but rudely caparisoned, were meandering their way along the beautifully wooded valley of the Fifeshire Eden. It was the beginning of the year 1401. Winter had not yet departed, and a snell and blustering wind, which blew with fierce fury along the strath, made the travellers shiver and say unrepeatably coarse things to one another. In the midst of the band, seated on an old broken-down horse, was a person of goodly presence, round whose shoulders a cloak such as the rustics wore thenadays was thrown, ostensibly to protect him from the falling rain and the bitterly cold wind, but in reality to shroud his well-known figure from the gaze of any chance-met peasant who might try to penetrate too eagerly beneath its surface. A half-cast glance told one that the wearer of that cloak, rough and uncouth though it seemed, was a knight of no mean order. His noble mien and dignified carriage bespoke a soul heroic and chivalrous. Just now, however, a brooding sense of dread sat on his pale cheeks and robbed his eyes of their wonted merriment.

On either side of him, and in front and behind, like warders, rode others who, from their apparel and the accoutrements of their horses, appeared to be noblemen. On they hurried through the gathering gloom and the rain which was now descending in torrents. Every one was sullenly silent, for when the prisoner —such he appeared to be—in the centre of the group ventured to express his dissatisfaction of the jaded steed he bestrode, the attendants did not deign to answer him, while their leader in grim humour scornfully retaliated by telling him that beggars should not be choosers, or words to that effect.

At length they entered the dark woods of Falkland, whose glades in after years were to resound with the bell of the wild

buck as it fled from its princely pursuers, and soon after the huge Mar, as the old castle of the Earls of Fife was wont to be called, loomed gloomily in sight. The warders on the walls were on the lookout for them, and as the cavalcade approached the drawbridge fell, torches shed their fitful glare in the court-yard, the poor prisoner passed over the fateful barrier, the great portcullis assumed its former position—David Stuart, Scotland's bi-primal Duke—first in time, as also first in rank—had stepped on that short and narrow path which leads from the prison to the grave. He had spent his last night with the world which he loved so well.

As the unfortunate prince, the heir-apparent to the Scottish throne, divests himself of the russet garments his captors thought wise to clothe him in, let us see what kind of man he is. Most comely to look at, most graceful and winning in his manners—even to enemies, most sweet-tempered and affable, fond of power and pleasure, most generous and benign, most noble and courageous, from top to toe a cicisbeo or lady's man—such was the debonair Duke of Rothesay.

He was a lovely youth, I guess ;
The panther in the wilderness
Was not so fair as he.
And when he chose to sport or play,
No dolphin ever was so gay
Upon the tropic sea.

That was in the days gone by, when his mother, Queen Annabella Drummond, a lady of incomparable goodness, sagacity, and firmness, was living ; when the inestimable Walter Traill, Bishop of St Andrews, and the lordly Earl of Douglas ruled the Church and State wisely and successfully. But, as if to aid the schemes of the Wicked One and his mortal menials, these three gifted and able rulers died within a short time of one another, and Church and Court and State were plunged into a horrible maelstrom of uncertainty, disreputableness, extravagance, and dissensions. Into the seething vortex the youthful prince was

unfortunately cast. He had respected his mother, whose constant care had been to put a restraint on the levities of her son. With her death, however, his passions broke loose; for, though honest and chivalrous to the heart's core, he was excessively bent on amorous pleasures, and gave way to the most unbridled libertinism. It was a sorry change, and everywhere he who had been the pride of Scotland was regarded now as

> . . . . . a shameless wight,
> Sore given to revel and ungodly glee;
> Few earthly things found favour in his sight,
> Save concubines and carnal companie,
> And flaunting wassailers of high and low degree.

Nevertheless, while the whole countryside was scandalized and looked on in disgust, there was one man in the State who heard the reports of the prince's wickedness with the greatest complaisance and delight. This was none other than the Duke of Albany, Rothesay's own uncle, a man—rather a monster of humanity—whose vices, ambition, cruelty, craftiness, and cowardice overshadowed any good qualities he may have been heir to. Uncle and nephew were as unlike one another in disposition as they could possibly be; consequently, there was not much love lost on either side. There is an old Scottish proverb which says that "freen's 'gree best apairt." Well had it been for Rothesay had he never seen his uncle's face, or broad seas rolled between them! The fates, however, had decreed otherwise.

The cause of Rothesay's imprisonment in the Mar of Falkland? Ah! Albany was, as has already been stated, crafty and ambitious, and just as ambition can brook neither law nor obstacle, he aimed at nothing less than the sovereignty of the kingdom. To accomplish this end he resolved on the destruction of the heir-apparent who, despite his waywardness, was promising to be too popular for the taste of his treacherous kinsman. True, there stood another in the way—the young Prince James,

Earl of Carrick, but on account of his youth he did not count for much. So Albany thought; first the fountainhead,—it silted up, it would be an easy task bridging the narrow stream that separated him from the throne. Rothesay must needs be removed; his assassins put it more politely, saying that he was not to be murdered—he was only to cease to live. His father, Robert the Third, was in his dotage, and the Duke of Albany who managed the affairs of the country, not by promoting the public good, but by sharing its spoils with an extravagant nobility that fed itself by its enormities upon the plebeian community, preyed upon the decrepitude of the weak-minded monarch.

Albany panted for the title of king. Nothing short of that would satisfy him; still he had to be careful. "Concealing his rancour, he continued to caress the prince with every appearance of affection, and introduced to his acquaintance some young men, his creatures, of pleasing manners but of debauched principles and irregular lives. Seduced by their example the royal youth was drawn into some irregularities and excesses which the duke represented to the king in the strongest and most glaring light, heightened by all the colourings which art and malice could suggest, what were nothing more than youthful escapades. He pretended an anxiety to prevent him disgracing himself; and to facilitate his reformation, he represented the absolute necessity of confining him, a scheme in which he was so far successful that he extorted from his weak-willed father an unwilling order for his being confined in Falkland Castle, under the immediate care and inspection of his uncle."

On receipt of the royal mandate Albany rubbed his palms with glee. Everything was playing into his hands, and with serpent-like subtlety he watched the movements of his victim. The bearers of the commission were Sir John Ramornie and Sir William Lindsay, both of whom were bitter enemies of the royal duke—the former because the prince's nature was of much too generous a mould for such a villainous character, while the

latter was thirsting for revenge for the affront done to his family.

Rothesay had been affianced to his cousin, Euphemia de Lindsay, the lovely sister of Sir William of Rossie,—he had slighted her for Elizabeth Dunbar, daughter of the proud Earl of March, and her again for Marjory Douglas—and the consequence was the deadly enmity of March and Lindsay. The poor fellow had not his sorrows to seek. Fettered to a woman imposed upon him—a woman most unamiable and detestable in his eyes, he was, by his neglect of her, continually at words with his father-in-law, Archibald, Earl of Douglas, surnamed the Grim, a knight of immovable sternness and indomitable pride. He had, moreover, become odious in the sight of his quondam servitor, Sir John Ramornie, a man polished in manners, but with a heart as deep and dark and treacherous as the whirling Charybdis itself.

Fitting executors these, and well they accomplished their fell design! Secrecy, however, was necessary. Rothesay was inveigled into Fife upon the pretence that he should proceed to St Andrews and take possession of the castle for the king, the bishop of that see having but lately died. Between Nydie and Strathtyrum the duke was waylaid by his uncle's agents while on his way thither with a few followers, imprisoned in the very fortress to which he was betaking himself for safety, and then, the place of his confinement having been decided upon, carried, as already stated, to Falkland Mar, where Ramornie was to take in hand "to leir him honest and civill maneris."

Ramornie the Vile relished the infernal work, and he had willing tools in two assassins whom Albany had hired to help him, by name John Wright and John Selkirk—two fiends to whom a gallows fifty cubits high would have been a gentle punishment indeed, nay, to whom the most awful tortures of the Inquisition had been but scanty meed for all their callous inhumanity. It is even averred that they were destined for the gallows, but had been snatched from it to do the bloody deed.

Words cannot picture the unparalleled cruelty of these unmitigated villains; it makes one's blood boil to think of it.

Into a gloomy dungeon that communicated with the outside world only by a small, narrow staircase which, save to the most inquisitive eyes, was all but indiscernible—into the bowels of the earth where the victim's shrieks and groans and the oppressor's threats and gibes could not be heard, there was the young Prince thrust and left, without food and without water, but with his aching limbs loaded with chains which allowed him no more freedom than to raise himself—left to starve slowly to death. Not a finger was to be laid upon the hapless victim; not a drop of his blood was to be shed; no mark of violence was to betray the secret of his death. Life, said John Ramornie Le Diable, was to be extinguished of itself. For want of trimming it with fresh oil, or of screening it from a breath of wind, the quivering light was to die in the socket. To suffer a man to die is not to kill him—that was the scoundrel's policy, and tenaciously and unerringly he stuck to it.

The day after his incarceration it was given out that the prince was taken dangerously ill of an infectious disease, aggravated by his exposure to the rains of the previous night. For obvious reasons only those who were deep in the plot were allowed near the prince's chamber. It were impossible to describe all the horrors of his captivity. Now and again the fiends of hell would break in upon the solitude, and with devilish joy mock and torture the forlorn youth. One day the assassin in whose charge the Duke was mainly left entered the dungeon. "With fiendish glee," writes Sir Walter Scott, "the wretch unfolded a piece of raw hide covering a bundle which he bore under his arm, and, passing the light to and fro before it, showed the unhappy prince a bull's head recently hewn from the trunk, and known in Scotland as the certain signal of death. He placed it at the foot of the lair on which the prince lay. 'Be moderate in your food,' he said; 'it is like to be long ere thou get'st another meal.'"

Very soon, however, the barbaric stratagem was discovered; and some women—Rothesay had always been a favourite in the eyes of women—made an ineffectual effort to undo it. For a time a maiden, believed by some to have been the daughter of the governor of the castle, managed to furnish him with thin oatmeal cakes, which she wrapped into the folds of her mantle and, going out under pretence of walking in the garden, passed through a narrow aperture in the wall of the dungeon. But, being discovered, she suffered martyrdom for her philanthropy. Then another woman, a nurse, drew milk from her own breast, and by a long reed conveyed it to the prisoner's mouth. But she, too, was found out, and execution was the reward of her charity. And at last, after, in the depth of despair and agony, devouring whatever his hands could clutch, gnawing even his own flesh, Rothesay crossed that river from the other side of which there is no return. Wyntoun writes:—

A thousand foure hundyr yeris and twa,
All before as ye herd done,
Our lord the Kingis eldest sone,
Suete and vertuous, yong and fair,
And his nerast lauchful ayr,
Honest, habil, and avenand (*elegant*),
Our Lorde, our Prynce, in all plesand,
Cunnand into litterature,
A seymly persone in stature,
Schir Davy, Duke of Rothesay,
Of Marche the sevyn and twenty day,
Yauld his saule till his Creatoure,
His corse til hallowit sepulture.
In Lundoris his body lies,
His spirite intil Paradys.

The country was electrified by the news of the prince's death. Few there were who would believe the report which Albany caused to be circulated, that Rothesay had died of dysentery; and so loud and threatening did the murmuring against the Regent become that he found it expedient to demand from his

royal brother a remission or pardon, which, however, does nothing at all, if it does not indeed lay the murder at Albany's own door. Everything points in that direction. Rothesay was buried privately in the Abbey of Lindores, far away from the tombs of his ancestors. King Robert, too, had his own thoughts about the tragedy, but was too much the instrument of unprincipled noblemen to be able to avenge it. To prevent his remaining son, Prince James, from falling into the hands of his nefarious uncle, the King sent him to France.

There is little more to be told. Punishment dogs ths heels of guilt as its companion ; and Heaven, who views the acts of king and peasant with the same impartial eye, does not allow such crimes to go unrequited. According to the early chroniclers, Rothesay's death was turned by heaven into a glorious martyrdom, for miracles were wrought for many years in the Church of Lindores where the prince was buried. Nor did the miracles cease until the victim's murder had been avenged. Twenty years afterwards James I., the poet-king, came back to claim his own again, and a terrible retribution fell on the descendants of Albany, when the iniquities of the father were visited upon the children. On Stirling's "sad and fatal mound"—the famous Heading Hill, so often bedewed with noble blood, Murdo, Duke of Albany and Earl of Fife, was beheaded, along with his father-in-law, Duncan, Earl of Lennox, and his two sons, Walter and Alexander Stuart.

. . . . .

Peace to thy dust !
Thy sleep is sound at last ; thy weary head
A couch without a thorn at length has prest ;—
The heart that Death has hush'd no dreams molest ;
No thorns bestrew the couch that Death has spread !

Sound is thy sleep,—and when again it flies,
Thou shalt not fear to see the night depart,
And to another morn unclose thine eyes ;
For to the Judgment then thou shalt not rise
Of erring men—but One who knows the heart,
And tries its reins—and pities as He tries.

The Romance of Squire Meldrum.

ABOUT two miles south-west of the village of Ceres stand a few fragments of the ancient house of Struthers, or, as it is called in some old papers, Auchter-uther-Struther, from the morasses which at one time surrounded it.

The seat of the Earls of Crawford, time was when the edifice, erected during an age of chivalry and warfare, and ornamented with pinnacle and turret and arch, stood in the midst of a noble park, under the broad shadow of stately and venerable beech trees. Though now ruinous, delightful associations cling tenaciously to it—some legend or romance of the feudal past, or some reminiscence of the days when royalty sought in "the kingdom" a pleasant retreat from the harassing cares of government.

Monarch and prince and peer received in this quiet spot the most welcome hospitality. And here, centuries agone, two noblemen might often have been seen walking, arm-in-arm, about the beautiful grounds, or reclining in the shade of the spreading beeches. One of them is a middle-aged man, whose grave demeanour speaks of a thorough acquaintance with the strifes of that unruly age;

> But in the glances of his eye
> A penetrating, keen, and sly
> Expression found its home.

Somewhat different is his companion—a well-built man of medium stature, in whose fair face, glowing with wanton blithesomeness, we perceive the index of the true knight of chivalry.

Just now they are engaged in earnest confabulation. Evidently they are intimate friends, for, as the fair-faced hero, William Meldrum, of Cleish and the Binn, recounts his valorous deeds, the poetic eye of Davie Lindsay mirrors the enthusiasm of the knight whose adventures and exploits, when leisure will permit him, he pencils for affection's sake, and affection's sake alone, in the most brilliant and fascinating spirit,—whose virtues and amiable gallantry he makes to glow and glint from every line and phrase with dazzling graphicness. The Romance of Squire Meldrum marks the consummation, the autumn-tide, so to speak, of the chivalric age in Scotland. Let us listen to the tale as it comes from the pen of Sir David Lindsay of the Mount, Meldrum's bosom-friend at Struthers.

Gude Williame Meldrum was he named,
Whose honour bright was ne'er defamed;
Stalwart and stout in every stryfe,
And born within the shire of Fyfe.

The squire was but twenty years of age when he began his adventures, and the graphic picture given us of the nobly-descended knight at that time straightway enlists our admiration. He looks a hero, every inch of him. On his handsome countenance sit laughter and jollity, while his manly and athletic figure, dignified and free, combined with an extraordinary amiableness of disposition, wins him hosts of warm admirers.

Because he was so courageous,
Ladies of him were amorous;
He was ane lover for a dame,
Meek in chalmer like a lamb,
But in the field ane champion,
Rampand like ane wild lion.

Well practised was he in all the arts of chivalry—so well indeed that, in the field—whether in earnest or in play—there were few who could compare with him; and to his knightly accomplishments were added the inestimable qualities of virtue

STRUTHERS CASTLE.

and wisdom. But he must needs win honour on foreign strands. The opportunity soon presented itself. Scotland and France in those days were firm friends, and when James of the Iron Belt sent a fleet, with three thousand men on board, under the command of the Earl of Arran, to assist the French king against the attacks of Henry VIII., Squire Meldrum eagerly threw in his lot with the expedition.

Now, as they passed the Irish coast, Carrickfergus, where two centuries before Edward Bruce was crowned, was set on fire and destroyed. On every side scenes of the most terrible barbarity were being enacted, but this young and valiant squire stayed, wherever he could, the hand of the brutal soldiery. All at once there broke out upon the grief-laden air a doleful cry of lamentation. He hastened in the direction of the sound, and discovered as fair a vision of charming young womanhood as his eyes had ever rested upon. Nude and defenceless she stood before a couple of villainous-looking rascals who were parting her garments between them, preparatory to executing the brutal savagery that awaited their hapless victim.

> Her kirtle was of scarlet red,
> Of gold ane garland on her head,
> Decorit with enamelyne ;
> Belt and brooch of silver fyne.

At Meldrum's feet she flung herself upon her knees, beseeching him to defend a helpless maiden, and he, nothing loth, at once picked up the gauntlet of love and chivalry, roundly upbraided the ruffians for their brutishness, and ordered them to restore to the lady her apparel. In reply—

> They drew their swords haistily,
> And straik at him with so great ire
> That from his harness flew the fyre.

Never in all his life had the knight been so sorely beset. Happily, however, he succeeded in slaying them both, his sword crashing right through the head of the one, and breaking

asunder over the other, whom he had to despatch with his dagger. Yet he himself escaped without hurt.

By this the trumpets blew, and Meldrum hastened to bid the fair lady adieu. But her heart had been won, and into the arms of her gallant deliverer she flung herself in an ecstacy of love and admiration and thankfulness, bidding him sojourn in her country, and offering him her heart and hand.

"Fain, fain would I stay," exclaimed the heroic youth, "but duty calls me. I must first try my fortune in France, and then, perchance, after the peace is made, will I come back to marry thee."

"Oh!" pleaded the lady, "let me go with thee, my preserver; for should I not love him paramount who rescued me from death, nay, from worse than death? Have no fear for me—I will dress myself as thy page, and follow thee wheresoever thou pleasest."

"Nay; it may not be—thou art too young to sail the sea in such company; but,

> Lady, I say you in certain,
> Thou shalt have lufe for lufe again,
> Truly unto my own life's end,
> Farewell! to God I you commend."

Ere he departed she bestowed on him a keepsake, a costly ruby set in a ring. By and by the ships reached the rock-bound coast of Brittany, where the army disembarked, Squire Meldrum being placed in command of five hundred warriors who would have gone through fire and water to serve their courageous captain. At that time Henry of England was lying with his army near Calais, while the army of Louis XII. was encamped not far off in Picardy. As yet there had been no actual collision between the rival hosts, though skirmishes were taking place daily. When word reached Meldrum of the state of matters, he immediately chose one hundred spearmen—the boldest and most valiant in his company, and rode with all haste to the French camp, where he was courteously welcomed by the king.

Just at that moment it happened that there went out of the English host a champion, a monstrous, powerful man----Talbart by name. He was armed with a coat of mail, and in his bonnet were silver medals to remind friends and foes of his knightly prowess. Every day, like Goliath of old, had he stalked in front of the French lines, crying—"I defy the armies of France : choose ye a man to come down to me, that he may break his spear with me for his lady's sake. No? Then ye are poltroons, every man of you, and laggards, brimful of cowardice."

At this the French were greatly afraid, but when the youthful Scot perceived the braggart warrior strutting through the army—

> Richt haistily he passed him till,
> Demanding him what was his will.
> "Forsooth! I can find none," quoth he,
> "On horse, or foot, dare fecht wi' me.'
> "Then," said he, "it were great shame
> Without battle ye should pass hame;
> Therefore, to God I make ane vow
> The morn myself shall fecht with you!"

Talbart disdained him, for he was but a youth, and, like the shepherd boy of Israel, ruddy and of a fair countenance. "My good child," said the champion, "thou'rt surely mad; thou art far too young and inexperienced to do battle with a giant like me. Zounds! but thou shouldst tremble at the very sight of me, and thy tongue cleave to the roof of thy mouth with fear."

"Be not too puffed up, proud knight," was the stripling's reply;

> "I trust that God shall be my guide,
> And give me grace to staunch thy pride,
> Though thou wert great as Gaul MacMorne."

But the English soldier only scorned him the more, calling him a presumptuous bairn, and left him with his disdainful words ringing in his ears.

On its being reported to Monsieur d'Aubigny that the squire

had decided to combat with Master Talbart, he sent for him and warmly commended his courage. Meldrum assured him that he had undertaken the task simply to uphold the honour of Scotland, and requested a suitable steed. A hundred having been collected from the cavalry, the knight chose one and proved it by leaping upon its back and spurring it to full speed, exclaiming after he had done so, that horse never ran more pleasantly.

He took his leave, and went to rest ;
Syne early in the morn him drest
Wantonly in his warlike weed—
All well armed, except the heid.
He leapt upon his courser wicht,
And set him in his stirrups richt.

During the night Talbart has had a horrible dream. A monstrous black otter seemed to rise out of the sea and fiercely attack him, dragging him from his steed and biting him till he bled. Much perplexed is he to know its meaning, and so he tells the dream to his companions. They deride his weakness, and bid him prepare for the fray. He arms himself cap-a-pie, and, vaulting on his horse, rides gallantly forward to the lists.

Then clarions and trumpets blew,
And many warriors hither drew ;
On every side came many a man
To behold wha the battle wan.
The field was in a meadow green,
Where every man might well be seen ;
The heralds put them in such order
That no man passed within the border,
Nor pressed to come within the green,
But heralds and the champions keen.

No sooner had the trumpets given the signal than the champions rushed from their posts with lightning speed. Great was the crash of their meeting. The lances shivered to atoms—even to the hilt; but, although the weapon of the Southron

struck full and fair, as Talbart meant it should, the Scottish cavalier sat as if he had been locked in the saddle. Fresh lances being assumed, the knights, with burning ire, again charged each other in full career, colliding in the centre with a noise like thunder. Once more the spears in flinders flew, the shock being so irresistible that horses and riders were thrown in a confused heap upon the ground. On their appearing for the next encounter Talbart's horse refused to take part in the game, and he had to get another. Once more the trumpets sounded the attack.

By that with all the force they can
They rudely at each other ran ;
Of that meeting ilk man did wonder,
Which sounded like ane crack of thunder.
Through cuirass and through gloves of plate,
That Talbart micht make nae debate,
The trencher of the Squyer's spear
Stuck still into Sir Talbart's gear.

All believed him dead. Lightly leaped the victor from his saddle to offer what comfort and support he could to his vanquished foe. As Talbart looked up his eyes fell upon the Squire's shield with its sable otter emerging, just as he had beheld it in his sleep, from a sea-wave field. "Alas!" he exclaimed, "my dream has come true ; yon otter, methought last night, made me bleed, and dragged me from my horse. Alack-a-day ! Before heaven I vow never to joust again. Thou knowest, sir knight, the compact we made ; therefore I yield up to thee, as conqueror, my horse and harness."

Nothing in history or fiction is more touching or graceful, nothing more heroic and honourable, nothing more generous and tender than the reply of the courteous Scottish knight—

"I thank you, brother, heartily ;
But nothing from thee must I take,
I fight for love and honour's sake,
Who covets more is but a churl,
Be he a belted knight or earl."

Talbart's wounds are dressed and attended to; and Meldrum, "courted and caressed" and made a welcome guest by enemies as well as friends—for those were times when soldiers loved honour and admired daring deeds—sojourns a while longer in France to add to his list of honours and adventures.

Wherever he went his fame preceded him; and when at last he bade adieu to beautiful France, where he was so well esteemed and where he had been asked in marriage by a lady of high degree,

> The Scots were glad of his return,
> Though French ladies for him did mourn.

From Dieppe he set sail in "a gay vessel," well furnished with artillery, halbert, spear, and bow, loaded with abundance of victuals and the richest and choicest wines the gardens of France could produce, and filled with a merry crew eager for new deeds of daring. One morning his ship was attacked by an English man-of-war, greater in bulk and strength than his own. But a Scotsman always puts a stout heart to a *stey brae*. A desperate conflict ensued; sixty Southrons were slain, while the Scots lost but fifteen men, and gained a glorious victory, boarding the hostile vessel and capturing her. Two hundred of the vanquished crew were landed upon the Kentish coast, and then the gallant knight continued his voyage with the rest of the prisoners, who were immured in Blackness Castle till ransom set them free.

And now Meldrum has returned to Scotland, where he is received with great honour. In the castle of Gleneagles he is invited to stay, the natural result of which is that he captures the heart of the handsome young widow, Marion Haldane. Many happy days does he spend there—

> Sometime with hawking and hunting,
> Sometime with wanton horse running;
> And sometime, like ane man of weir,
> Full galliardly wald rin ane speir;—

He wan the prize above them all,
Baith at the butts and the futeball.

News is brought one morning that a baron called Macfarlane is harrying the Lennox and has already captured one of the lady's castles. Meldrum at once determines to recapture the fortress, or nobly die in the attempt. This, however, was a duty incumbent upon the squire, for, says Leslæus, "there prevailed among the Scottishmen ane ancient custom that, wherever they happen to lodge, they defend their hosts from all hurt, even to the shedding of their blood and the losing of their lives if need be." There is an old saying in Scotland, too, that

I may weill see my friend need,
But I will not see him bleed.

By this rude law of Scottish hospitality, therefore, Meldrum is obliged to own his hostess's quarrel and take the field against Macfarlane. And, to be sure, he is not reluctant. With her glove in his helmet he sets out with his men and the Gleneagles retainers. Marching all the afternoon and all the night, he arrives early in the morning at the stronghold, which, after a stubborn resistance, he takes by scaling the walls, himself going first. Again he displays the humane conqueror, as he has always been, sparing Macfarlane and letting the others go wherever they please. On his return to Strathearn the squire is received by his hostess with every manifestation of welcome.

But bitter-sweet, short-lived, and dearly bought is to be all their joyfulness and love. A cruel knight, Sir John Strivelin (or Stirling) of Keir, has resolved on Meldrum's destruction. It seems that the squire's arrival at Gleneagles had knocked all Keir's arrangements on the head, for he had determined that Lady Marion should marry a relation of his own. Pitscottie, that quaint old chronicler, relates the same story, how that between Leith and Edinburgh, under the Rood Chapel, Squire Meldrum was treacherously set upon by Stirling and his vassals, when "he fought cruelly with them, and slew the Laird of

Keir's principall servant before his face, defendant himselfe, and hurt the Laird that he was in perrell of his life, and sex and twentie of his men hurt and slaine; yet, through multiplication of his enemies, he was oversett and driven to the earth, and left lying for dead, for he was strucken throw the bodie, and the knappis of his elbows stricken fra him. Yet, be the mightie power of God, he eschapped the death, and leived fyftie yeirs thairafter."

Beside the mangled body of her lord Lady Marion threw herself, bathing his blood-stained face with her tears.

> "Alas!" quoth she, "that I was born!
> In my quarrel thou art forlorn;
> Thou wast a gem of gentleness,
> And very well of worthiness."
> Then to the earth she rushèd doon,
> And lay into ane deadly swoon.

Meanwhile Anthony d'Arcy, Seigneur de la Bastie, the Deputy-Governor of Scotland, has pursued the villain and apprehended him. Our hero, too, has been taken to lodgings, where he is attended to by the greatest doctors in the country, who flock spontaneously to render him all the assistance and comfort their art affords, and save his life if that be possible. Long time, however, he lay at death's door, and as his wounds mended he learned so thoroughly the art of medicine that he became himself, through dearly bought experience, an expert chirurgeon, and took a wonderful delight in after years in ministering gratuitously to the indigent, whose troubles and illnesses he was always ready to assuage and remedy. While convalescent, the squire was informed that his lady-love had been compelled to marry.

> So these lovers never met again,
> Which was to them ane lasting pain;
> Howbeit her body was absent,
> Her tender heart was aye present;
> Penelopè for Ulysses,
> I trow, had never more distress;

Nor Cresseid for true Troilus
Was one-tenth part so dolorous.

In Fife, the story goes, there lived an aged lord, Patrick Lindsay of the Byres, who, having heard of Meldrum's high renown at home and abroad, courted his company and gave him the care of his household, appointing him his chief marischal and auditor of his accounts. By Lord Lindsay, the Sheriff-Principal, the squire was also made Sheriff-Depute of his native county, and at Struthers he spent the eventide of his life. His equity to every man within his jurisdiction, and his generosity to the poor, made him a great favourite in the humblest cottage, while at the tables of the great he was ever a welcome and honoured guest by reason of his illustrious fame and courteous address.

Nor, amid the hurly-burly of life's multifarious duties, did he forget the sweetheart of his early manhood.

Each year for his lady's sake
Ane royal banquet would he make—
With wild fowl, venison, and wine,
With tart, and flam, and fruitage fine,
With mirth, music, and minstrelsy,—
All this he did for his lady.

Many years the squire spent with his lordly patron, but at last the Angel of Death approached and struck him with his mortal dart, when his soul, remarks the poet, with joy angelical took its flight straight to heaven. As the end drew near he bade farewell—a long, last, sad farewell to all his friends on earth. "The fairest eyes of France," says Tytler, drawing the veil over the final scene, "will be dimmed by weeping, the beauteous stars of London eclipsed by sorrow, and the lamps of loveliness which illuminate the night of the north shrouded in the darkness of grief. But most heartily does he bid farewell to the fairest of them all—the star of Strathearn :—

'Ten thousand times adieu, above them all,
Star of Stratherne, my Lady-Sovereign,
For whom I shed my blood with mickle pain.'"

The Great Seer of Fife.

SIX centuries ago a royal barque sailed into a harbour in one of the Orkney Islands. It had come from Norway, whither several Scottish knights had hastened on the death of Alexander III. to bring home the young Queen Margaret, better known in history as the Maid of Norway, to occupy the vacant throne. Grief-stricken was the little party of Scotsmen, for the bloom of the tender flower was fading fast away ; and with her death there swept over the country such a blast as Scotland had never before known. From this dire confusion, however, she rose, thanks to the splendid military genius of Wallace and Bruce, to the most unexpected and extraordinary height of power. One member of that knightly band draws our fancy back to former times,

> When Michael Scott, the famous Seer of Fife,
> Old women turn'd, how strange ! to hares and fauns,
> And woke the sleeping winds to shake broad fields
> Of golden grain.

A great mediæval scholar was Sir Michael Scott. Of his birth and parentage we know but very little—of his death not any more. All the reliable information that has been bequeathed to us regarding his early life is that he was born exactly a hundred years before the battle of Bannockburn—the year, by the way, in which William the Lion died. A Homer-like contention is still waged anent his birthplace. The diocese of Durham, the upper streams of the Tweed, and the kingdom of Fife all claim him as their own.

History tells us little or nothing either about his ancestry, yet his parents must have occupied an influential position among their contemporaries, for Michael's life was one of learning and travel and research from beginning to end. Very early he showed signs of the greatest ability, and, profiting by a liberal education, conducted by the ablest teachers the times could produce, he soon dipped deeply into the mysteries and speculations of European philosophy, rising rapidly by the extraordinary acuteness of his mental capabilities and the diligence of his study, till he was hailed and recognised as one of the most remarkable men of the world.

From time immemorial—in ages darksome and superstitious, as well as in the most enlightened—monarchs and rulers have extended much encouragement to men of science and learning. Witness, for instance, the honours showered upon the sages during the sway of the Ptolemies and the sovereigns of the East. Courts were open to the great scholars of the day, and kings and philosophers laid their heads together to solve scientific problems. The wonders of the firmament and atmospheric phenomena—weather changes, the striking beauty of the rainbow, the grandeur and nature of meteors, the majesticness of storms, the dread effects of electricity—have attracted the attention of mankind since the most ancient date, and astrologers and philosophers in all ages of the world's history have hastened to analyse and explain them. And while the explanation of these extraordinary wonders was perfectly obvious and intelligible to the initiated, it is not strange that men like Michael Scott should have been held in uncanny repute by the ignorant and superstitious people among whom they lived.

It was while the occult sciences were being encouraged that Sir Michael made a tour of Europe. The stock of knowledge obtainable in his native country he soon exhausted. Thereafter, repairing to the University of Oxford, then, as now, one of the great centres of learning, he pursued his studies with such honest zeal that in a short time he was master of the Latin and

Arabic languages, besides distinguishing himself in astrology and chemistry—the black art on which principally rests his fame as a seer. There was nothing he could not do; nothing he could not tell. He possessed no scanty share of the true sciences; was credited with an intimate acquaintance with the untrue. From Oxford he went to Paris, where he underwent a course of mathematics, in the acquisition of which he attained such a singular proficiency that his fellow-students styled him Michael the Mathematician. Yet there was no lull in his other studies —judicial astrology and occult chemistry he pursued as vigorously as ever. Before he left the Parisian Academy he had conferred upon him the degree of Doctor of Theology; and when he did leave it, it was only after he had made himself master of all that could be got out of it.

The Land of the Cæsars next claimed his attention, and all at once his fame blazed abroad. In the prosecution of his work he made Padua his headquarters, teaching and being taught in the most celebrated nursery of arts and learning in Italy, where trod in after years the hallowed feet of Galileo. Michael's genius still lives in that venerable spot. His essays on astrology gained him the most enthusiastic acclamations. It was at this time, too, that he commenced to publish those portentous predictions which astonished the people of that enlightened country and made his name be spoken of in whispers with reverence and awe in "the remotest of the sea-encircled Hebrides."

Thereafter Scott crossed the seas to Spain, and took up his residence in Toledo—"the fountain-head of much of the wisdom of the time"—whose University was one of the greatest centres for the cultivation of the abstract sciences. Here he devoted himself to his favourite pursuits, interpreting phenomena, discovering causes, discerning and revealing the hidden springs of the universe; eagerly, curiously, persistently interrogating and examining everything. He studied all things;—Aristotle and animals, magic and medicine, chemistry and alchemy, necromancy and thought-reading—the black-art which was the trade-mark of

Toledo. Here, too, he translated from the Arabic into the Latin Aristotle's "History of Animals," comprising nineteen books in all.

Sovereigns and philosophers soon courted his acquaintance. Frederick II., King of Sicily, and afterwards Emperor of Germany, honoured him with his especial friendship, and invited him to his court, appointing him astrologer-royal, in which capacity Sir Michael translated for the king almost the whole of Aristotle's works. During his sojourn in Germany the famous Scotsman wrote his "Opinions of Astrologers"; an original work, called "Liber Introductorius Sive Indicia Quæstionum"; and a treatise entitled "Physiognomia et de Hominis Procreatione." On resigning his royal position he turned his attention to medicine as a profession, and such was his success that, in a comparatively short time, crowds of admirers from every quarter flocked to visit him, curious to behold the great doctor who could reveal to them the secrets of the future. When he bade farewell to Germany he told Frederick how, when, and where he should die, a prophecy which was fulfilled to the very letter.

Michael's fame and reputation reached this country before him, and no sooner did he set foot on English soil than he received an invitation from Edward I. to spend some time at the Saxon Court. When he arrived once more at Balwearie, from which he had been so long an absentee, Alexander III. was dead, and Sir Michael was deputed, along with Sir David Wemyss, also a Fife nobleman, to proceed to Norway for the grand-daughter of the deceased sovereign. He was an old man then—

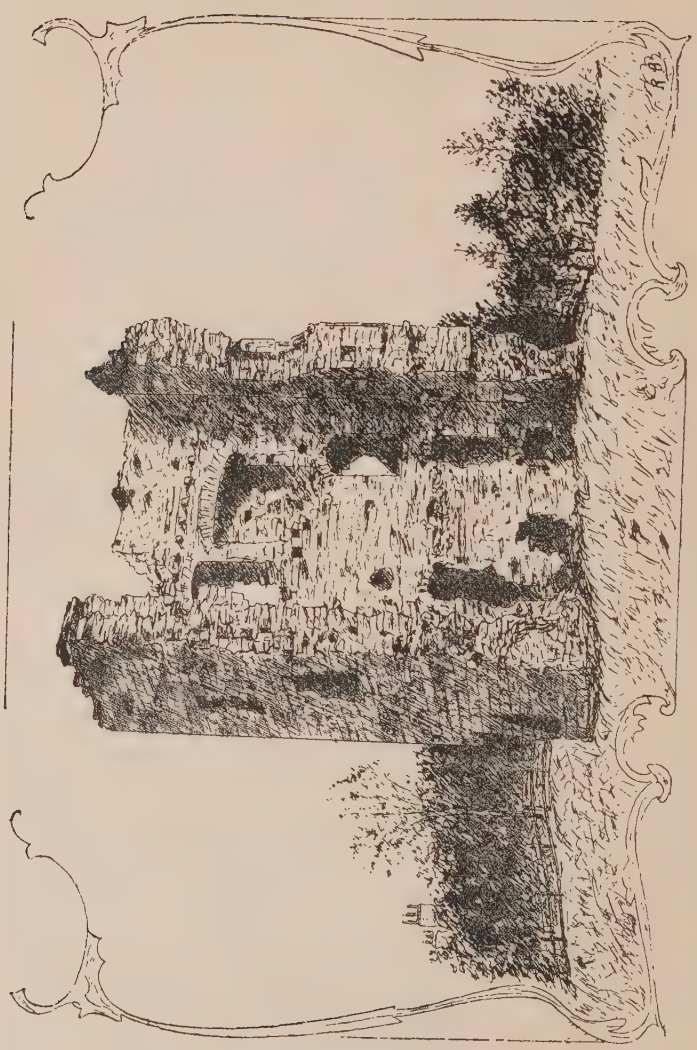
His lyart haffets wearing thin and bare.

That was in 1290, and two years later he died, as extraordinary a man as the world has ever seen; not a man whom his own generation alone stared and wondered at and called great, but a man whose memory is as fresh to-day as it was six hundred years ago.

The great bulk of the people stood in awe of him—a mysterious being they thought him, who could read their thoughts like a book. But the reason is not far to seek. He was a man miles ahead of an unenlightened age; and ignorance, aided by its cousin rumour or popular report, is ever anxious and ready to distort and mystify the reputation of such a person, the more so in an age when superstition ranges about unfettered. Magic incantations and tales of philtres; the mysteries of astrology and alchemy; the absurd forebodings of evil, by perpetual reproductions ever green and fresh—these were the landmarks of his time.

As we gaze upon the old mouldering ruins of Balwearie Castle, standing desolately amid silver-weeded, dimpled hills and valleys, the weird-like stories about Sir Michael's miraculous powers come back to our minds. People say that Scott was not a Fifer,—they say he did not even live in Balwearie Castle,—the wizard was a myth. And yet round those ivied and nettled lonely walls there clings a spell of magical romance—and down every inch of that rough and toilsome brae which one must climb to reach the top breathes the legendary renown of the great scholar.

And Michael did not live here, did he not? "Is not this yawning valley, where winds for ever dwell, called the Wizard's Gap to this day, because the great magician's familiar demon created the breezy hollow by one superfluous blast from his invisibly capacious lungs? Was it not down this very road that the same fiend, voracious for work, went, at his master's command, to make ropes of the sand that silts up Kirkcaldy Harbour? And don't the town councillors wish he had succeeded? Wasn't it from Balwearie's windows that the wizard looked down over the verdant lonely valley and saw the Tiel meandering on its way to the sea, in the teeth of an easterly haar no doubt, and prophesied that the day would come when these quiet solitudes would be broken by the noisy hoofs of an iron steed? Hark! the distant clamour of a passing train



BALWEARIE CASTLE.

fulfils the prophecy as it rumbles over the viaduct that spans the Tiel.

"Was it not from the gateway of Balwearie Castle that the wizard came forth to dole alms to the wandering beggars, whom woe betide if they whined the shibboleth 'God bless you;' for immediately the food turned to fire that was like to consume them, and the coins became withered leaves in their shaking hands?"

Was it not on the battlemented roof of this old tower, too, that the white-haired, venerable sage sat—his astrologer robes hanging loosely from his shoulders, his wondrous Book of Fate laid open-leaved upon his knees, and mysterious Arabic books and still more mysterious astronomical instruments lying scattered about him—sat during night's hours of solitude, gazing into the mighty "star-sown space" of the heavens and conversing with its innumerable orbs?

Yes, this *was* the very spot; and the popular belief is that this also was the spot where the dreaded wizard was so sadly importuned by the evil spirit who came every night demanding work to do. Auld Michael bade him cleave the Eildon Hills in three. The feat was accomplished in a single night—rather hastily, as one may guess from what seems to be a mighty spadeful of earth toppling somewhat clumsily on one of the peaks. Daylight, no doubt, arrived ere the work was completed, for the Prince of Darkness loves to work only in the dark, and the tumble-down summit is a memento of the demon's haste and —handicraft!

This great exploit is very much open to question, for the Romans who invaded our country a thousand years and more before Scott's days, encamped on one of the summits, and their writers speak of the "three hills"—*trimontes*—while remains of a Pictish tumulus are still visible. But it is scarcely to be wondered at that a shot so wide of the mark should be fired when so many things connected with such a man were mysterious, and the imagination of the aristocracy as well as the populace

was excited, and they hungrily welcomed the most degenerate and ridiculous superstitions.

Next night the demon was commanded to "bridle the Tweed with a curb of stone." And it was done. A basaltic dyke crosses the stream near Ednam! But the indefatigable fiend was not yet pacified. To get rid of the tormentor Scott set him to twist ropes out of sea-sand—a laborious task at which the infernal labourer, architect, and rope-spinner toiled unceasingly and toiled in vain.

> Some say the deil's dead,
> And buried in Kirkcaldy.

So runs the old couplet. What a burial that must have been! Did the endless task given him by the wizard of Balwearie gnaw away the fibres of his knotty life? The hoary-headed warlock is, at all events, the reputed tamer of him; and down through the centuries house after house has been added to the "Lang Toon's" great longitude to keep the mischief-maker quiet.

What we might term reciprocity of piracy was very common in those days, and sailors revelled in plundering the vessels of another country when international laws were almost a nonentity. French pirates had just helped themselves too liberally to Scottish merchandise, and Michael was commanded to go to Paris for the purpose of remonstrating with the king of France. Preparatory to his departure the warlock retired to his consulting chamber, turned over the leaves of his magic Book of Might, and summoned to his presence a monstrous black horse—none other than the Prince of Darkness himself—on which he set out all alone for the sunny South. As they flew through the air, the Devil asked his rider what the old beldames of Scotland were wont to mutter at bed-time; but Michael was too ancient a disciple, and had more wits than the Evil One gave him credit for, therefore sternly replied, "What is that to thee? Mount, Diabolus, and fly!" When he reached Paris—an ambassador minus a retinue—the French monarch contemptuously refused to have anything

to do with him; but the sturdy knight requested him to wait till his horse had stamped three times. At the first stroke of his mighty foot all the steeples in Paris shivered from their foundations, and the bells began to peal; at the second three of the palace towers crashed to the ground, and the king, rather than endure the calamity which the uplifted hoof of the mighty Apollyon was ready to administer, granted the Scotsman's requests, and sent him on his way rejoicing.

At Oxford Scott is said to have had with him a train of brownies, who attended his beck and call and performed many prodigious exploits. A deep pathway between Kirkcaldy and Raith they excavated in a single night for their master. Near Dolphinton, in Lanarkshire, too, is a wonderful cutting in a spur of the hills, so extraordinary that it is a question of doubt whether it be the work of nature or not. Close by, there may also be seen a conical hill, called the Sugar-loaf, which the necromancer's familiar spirits are alleged to have constructed one night long ago, by riddling the earth which they dug from the hillside in making the cutting.

Strange and wonderful things took place after Michael returned from his continental tour. One tale tells how the great magician had been travelling one day, and when returning home, hungry and footsore, his appetite was awakened by the smell of newly-baked bannocks as he passed the open door of a farmhouse. His request for something to eat was churlishly refused, there being only enough to serve the wants of the reapers who were every moment expected in from a neighbouring *hairst rig*. At this want of courtesy Sir Michael gave his servant a scroll, and bade him put it on the door—

> **Maister Michael Scott's man**
> **Came seeking meat and gat nane;**
> **So round about the fire I rin,**
> **With mazled legs and birsled skin.**

When this was done, the mistress of the house suddenly

commenced to waltz with great dexterity round the fire, which was, according to the times, in the centre of the floor. She was shouting lustily the words of the spell as the reapers came in from the fields, and, yielding to the power of the enchanter, they too joined the dance, spinning round and round in hot pursuit, one after the other, like people possessed; and she cried and they cried till the kitchen was like a "house of bedlamites," and they were one and all ready to drop down from sheer exhaustion.

At last the farmer himself came upon the scene, and, hearing the hullabaloo, peeped in at the window. The situation was terrible. Catching sight of Scott and his servant not far off he went and begged him to undo the spell. Then, and not till then, did Sir Michael, telling the guidman to walk backward through the door and lift the scroll as he went, think that the Nabalish housewife had been sufficiently punished for her inhospitality.

Was it not in Balwearie, too, that the necromancer gave those wonderful feasts to his friends? And the strange thing about them was that Scott made no preparation whatever, yet no sooner were the guests seated at table than there suddenly appeared before them the choicest of viands and of wines—verily, the viands of kings, "worthy the table of the great Solomon," brought in by the wizard's demon servitors. Here was a dish purloined from the royal pantry of England, there a tit-bit which a moment before had been in the kitchen of France, and everywhere delicacies, all unequalled in sweetness of flavour, from all the distant pantries of kings. And the guests ate heartily and abundantly, and drank to overflowing, nevertheless invariably went away hungry, for the sumptuous repasts were only dreams, shams, mockeries. Michael's feasts were often Barmecide banquets; like Shacabae, in the Arabian Nights, the feasters enjoyed the good things only in dumb show; they fed on nothing—for Michael was a clever mesmerist, a downright cheat.

On one occasion the guests asked their host for a marvel, and a vine-tree sprouted up before their wondering eyes. They were told to take a bunch of the luscious fruit when Sir Michael should give the sign. "Cut!" exclaimed the magician; and, sudden as he spoke, each guest found himself with his neighbour's sleeve in the one hand and a knife in the other. Lo! the grapes were gone—it was all a dream.

Our hearts are *wae* and beat a sad accompaniment to the discomfiture of the hapless guests, to whom it is more than likely the castle harper chanted this mocking strain—

> "What gars ye gant, my merrie men a',
> What gars ye look sae drearie;
> What gars ye hang your heids sae low
> In the Castle o' Balwearie?"

Nothing circumstantial is known about Sir Michael's death. About 1290 he disappeared from society as suddenly as he burst in upon it in the rôle of one of the greatest scholars and scientists of his day. The place of his burial, too, is disputed; the honour is claimed by Melrose Abbey and by Coltrame Holme, in Cumberland. But what history fails to record about his last days is supplied by legendary tales. One tradition puts his death down to the machinations of a then-time Delilah who importuned him, in spite of all his arts and familiar spirits, into confessing "that he could defy everything except broth made from the flesh of a *breme* sow;" and from a dish of this he died. Another tradition asserts that he foretold his own death, and that it would take place by a stone falling on his head. He was standing in church one day with bent and bared head—a man yearning after divine things as ardently as he had searched for knowledge, and spurned and doubted by the Church which pronounced him a heretic, when a stone, loosened by the motion of the bell-rope, fell and wounded him mortally.

The author of Waverley, of course, avers that Sir Michael lies buried in Melrose's buttressed and gray-ruined abbey. In

the "Lay of the Last Minstrel" he makes the astonished old monk say to William of Deloraine when that knight appears at the abbey's holy pile to win for Lady Branksome the treasure of the tomb :—

"And darest thou, Warrior ! seek to see
What heaven and hell alike would hide ?

. . . .

When Michael lay on his dying bed
His conscience was awakenèd ;
The words may not again be said,
That he spoke to me on death-bed laid ;
They would rend this Abbaye's massy nave,
And pile it in heaps above his grave.

I swore to bury his Mighty Book,
That never mortal might therein look ;
I buried him on St Michael's night,
When the bell tolled one, and the moon was bright ;
And I dug his chamber among the dead,
When the floor of the chancel was stainèd red,
That his patron's Cross might over him wave,
And scare the fiends from the Wizard's grave.

It was a night of woe and dread,
When Michael in the tomb I laid !
Strange sounds along the chancel passed,
The banners waved without a blast."—

Slow moved the Monk to the broad flag-stone
Which the bloody Cross was traced upon ;
He pointed to a secret nook,—
An iron bar the Warrior took ;
And the Monk made a sign with his withered hand,
The grave's huge portal to expand.

Before their eyes the Wizard lay
As if he had not been dead a day,
His hoary head in silver rolled,
He seemed some seventy winters old.
A palmer's amice wrapt him round,
With a wrought Spanish baldric bound,

Like a pilgrim from beyond the sea:
His left hand held his Book of Might;
A silver cross was in his right;
The lamp was placed beside his knee.
High and majestic was his look,
At which the fellest fiends had shook,
And all unruffled was his face:—
They trusted his soul had gotten grace.

Then Deloraine, in terror, took
From the cold hand the Mighty Book,
With iron clasped and with iron bound:—
He thought, as he took it, the dead man frowned;
But the glare of the sepulchral light,
Perchance, had dazzled the Warrior's sight."

Sir Michael's magic books are said to have endured for some centuries, decipherable but only wholly intelligible to the master wizard himself. Dempster informs us that in his young days—about 1600 A.D.—they were supposed to be still in existence, yet, like Pandora's box, could not be opened without invoking the malignancy of the innumerable fiends "thrang and strang," who kept a vigilant eye upon them. When Satchelles, a doggerel poet of the seventeenth century, was visiting Burgh in Cumberland, in 1629, a gentleman showed him a volume reported to be the work of the Balwearie warlock. This is what he says:—

"The book which he gave me
Was of Sir Michael's Scott's historie,—
Which historie was never yet read through,
Nor never will, for no man dare it do.
Young scholars have picked out something
From the contents, but dare not read within.
He carried me along the castle then,
And showed his written book hanging on an iron pin;
The volume of it did seem so large to me
As the Book of Martyrs and Turk's Historie.

. . . . .

His writing pen did seem to be
Of hardened metal, like steel or accumie.

. . . . .

Then in the church he let me see
A stone where Mr Michael Scott did lie;
He told me none durst bury under that stone,
For Mr Michael's name does terrify each one."

Taken all in all Scott had no coeval in worth. Marvellous great man! Where are his equals? Linguist, astrologer, and chemist; hypnotist and chiromancer; mathematician, theologian, and philosopher; and seer and traveller to boot. Gesner designates him Michael Mathematicus—the Mathematician, and Holinshead Michael Medicus—the Physician. The sub-title of Great applies not amiss to him. He is mentioned by Dante in his "Divine Comedy," and Leslæus describes him as *singularii philosophiae, astronomiae, ac medicinae laude prestans; dicebatur penitissimos magicae recessus indagasse*—a man with a very high reputation for philosophy and astronomy, and distinguished by his extraordinary fame in medicine, and credited with having digged laboriously at the most hidden depths of "the black art" which was so much studied by scholars of all nations.

Spoken of in this strain by historians and biographers, it is not to be wondered at that Michael's memory survives in a thousand vulgar legends. He found it pleasurable to seek knowledge, and fairly revelled in its possession. Greater glory be his, too, when we remember that he lived six hundred years ago, and did much by his attainments to dispel the clouds which so darkly enveloped that benighted age.

. . . . .

Thy glory down the arch of time has roll'd,
Like the great day-star to the ocean dim.

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